Legal Services Society

Annual Service Plan Report

2008/2009

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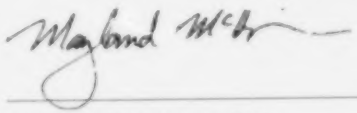
Accountability Statement

This report was prepared under the direction of the Legal Services Society (LSS) Board of Directors in accordance with the Legal Services Society Act, the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act, and BC Reporting Principles. The LSS board is accountable for what has been included in this report and how it has been reported.

The information in this report reflects the society's actual performance for the year ended March 31, 2009, in relation to the February 2009 service plan. The measures presented are consistent with the society's mission, goals, and objectives, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance.

The LSS board is responsible for ensuring controls are in place that measure performance accurately and in a timely fashion. This report contains estimates and interpretive information that represent the best judgment of management. All significant decisions, events, and identified risks, as of March 31, 2009, have been considered.

Any changes in mandate, direction, goals, strategies, measures, or targets that were made after the release of the February 2009 service plan, as well as any significant limitations in the reliability of data, have been identified in this report.



D. Mayland McKimm, QC
Chair, LSS Board of Directors
April 2009

Message from the Chair

Dear Mr. Attorney:

Our past fiscal year was the most challenging year the Legal Services Society has faced since the restructuring in 2002. The deteriorating financial climate led to a sharp increase in demand for legal aid and to a significant decline in non-government revenues. Despite these challenges, the society continued to deliver cost-effective programs designed to help low-income people find timely and lasting solutions to their legal problems.

To accomplish this, the board of directors authorized the use of $3.4 million from the society's non-government funds in 2008/2009—money that was intended for new legal aid projects—to ensure the society was able to continue providing emergency family services, immigration services, family duty counsel, and criminal duty counsel.

That, however, is not the end of the challenges for legal aid in BC. The falling economy means government funding for 2009/2010 will remain unchanged from the levels provided in 2008/2009 (except for a modest increase earmarked by the Ministry of Attorney General for large criminal cases), while revenue from the society's two non-government funders and its own interest revenue will continue to decline.

To avoid a substantial deficit in 2009/2010, the board instructed LSS to prepare a budget that brings services and costs closer in line with government funding. As a result, at the end of 2008/2009, LSS was forced to reduce or eliminate some criminal, family, and immigration services; to reduce the tariffs paid to private lawyers; and to lay off 16% of its workforce. LSS will also be using a substantial portion of its non-government revenue and all of its accumulated surplus non-government funds in 2009/2010 to meet the current shortfall in funding. The society has also implemented measures to enhance its ability to manage capacity, budget, and risk, and to improve the accuracy of its financial forecasting.

In the board's assessment, the society is now providing services far below what the board believes is needed to properly assist low-income British Columbians and to effectively support the efficient operation of the justice system. The society looks forward in the coming year to working with the Attorney General to develop programs and services that will better meet these needs and further our mutual objectives of timely, lasting, and cost-effective justice for those most in need.

The society finished the year with a larger-than-planned $4.2 million deficit. Primary contributors to this were a drop in Notary Foundation revenues from $3.8 million the previous year to $1.7 million, a $4.7 million increase in tariff expenditures largely to service the increased demand, as well as transition costs attributable to downsizing in the fourth quarter.

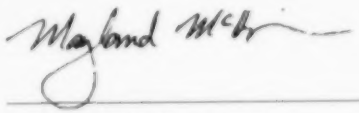
Planned projects for 2009/2010 include a pilot project with duty counsel in Kelowna designed to fill a gap in criminal representation created by the recent reduction in services. Also planned is a new, street-level legal aid office within a BC Housing building in New Westminster. LSS's top priority will, however, be the effective management of service costs to meet demand.

In these difficult times, the Legal Services Society's executive and staff must be applauded for what they have accomplished and for their continued commitment to the society's strategic direction. Known as "Legal Aid Renewal," LSS's strategic plan focuses on client outcomes, fiscal prudence, quality assurance, innovation, and collaboration with other justice system stakeholders.

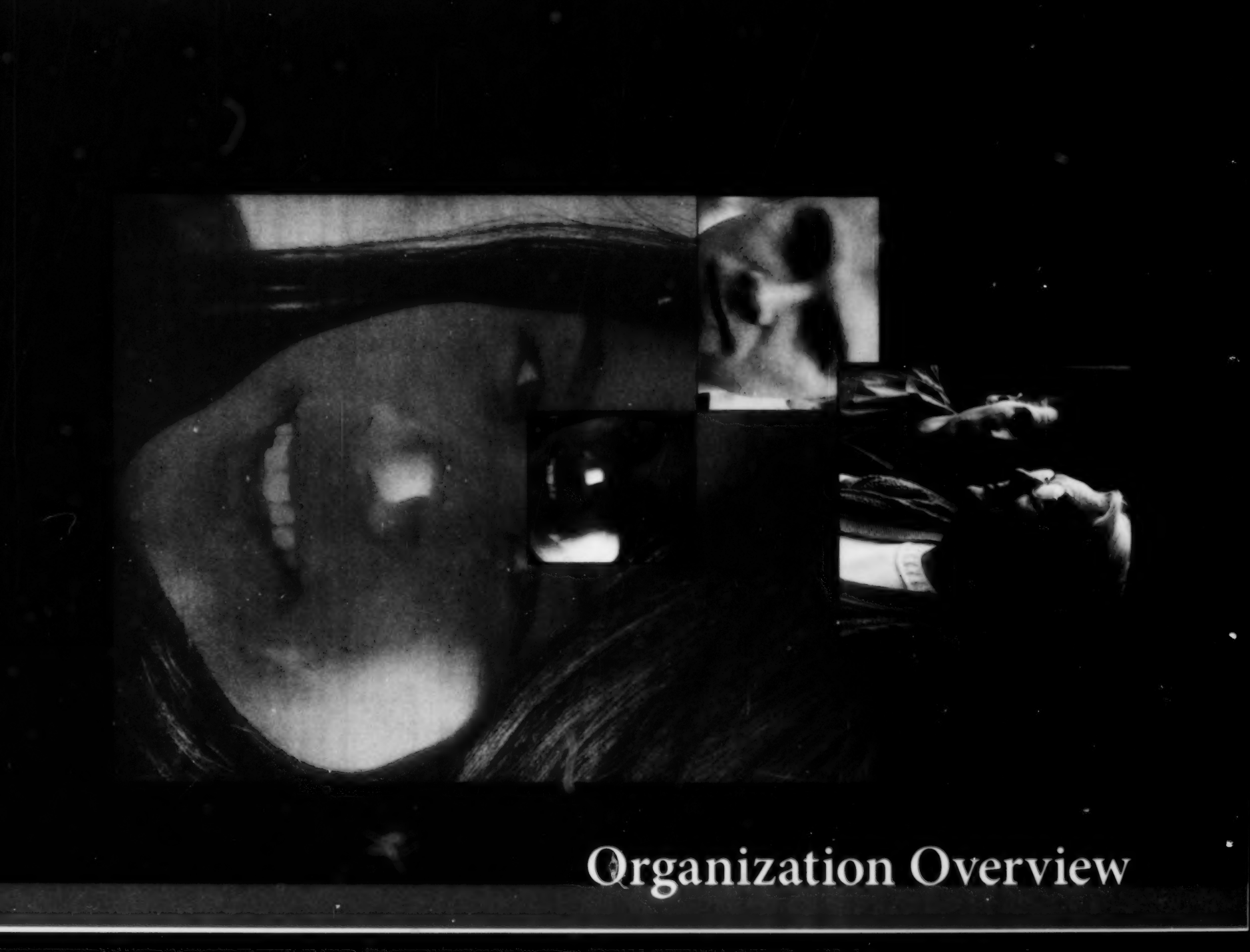
This collaborative approach with the Ministry of Attorney General and other partners led to several of the society's performance highlights for 2008/2009, including the Downtown Community Court (which won a Premier's Innovation and Excellence Award), the Nanaimo Justice Access Centre, and videoconferencing for bail hearings. Other performance highlights include a new telephone triage system that allows staff in our province-wide call centre to direct all phone clients to the appropriate legal aid service, expanded services in BC's northwest, and new pilot projects for Aboriginal communities throughout the province. To assist with future planning, LSS also commissioned a survey of the legal needs of low- and middle-income people. This survey found that 83% of low- and middle-income British Columbians experienced a legal problem in the past three years.

While there is no doubt that the Legal Services Society is facing a challenging time, our board and organization are exceptionally well-equipped to deal with these challenges. LSS staff, management, and board members remain dedicated to Legal Aid Renewal and to making a positive difference for low-income people. We look forward to continued collaboration with our justice system partners to make access to efficient, fair, and affordable justice a reality for all British Columbians.

Note, however, that LSS's innovative services, and its success at delivering cost-effective, quality legal aid, are at risk without increased revenue.



D. Mayland McKimm, QC
Chair, LSS Board of Directors
April 30, 2009



Organization Overview

Organization Overview

The Legal Services Society (LSS) provides legal aid in British Columbia. Created by the Legal Services Society Act in 1979, LSS is a non-profit organization that remains independent of government. Our priority is to serve the interests of people with low incomes.

LSS mandate

Under section 9(1) of the LSS Act, the society's mandate is to:

- help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice,
- establish and administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid to people in BC, and
- provide advice to the Attorney General about legal aid and access to justice for people in BC.

Section 9 also states that the society is to:

- give priority to identifying and assessing the legal needs of people with low incomes in BC,
- consider the perspectives of both justice system service providers and the general public,
- coordinate legal aid with other aspects of the justice system and community services, and
- be flexible and innovative in carrying out its mandate.

LSS vision, mission, values

Our vision, mission, and values statements guide our work.

Our vision

Our vision is a British Columbia where all people are able to find timely and lasting solutions to their legal issues.

Our mission

Our mission is to provide innovative and collaborative legal aid services that enable people with low incomes to effectively address their issues within the justice system.

Our values

Making a positive difference: We work with clients to help them find solutions to their legal issues and prevent future issues. We strive to ensure people with low incomes get equal access to and the intended benefits from the law.

Leadership: We seek to understand our clients' needs and collaborate with our community and justice system partners to develop innovative services to respond to those needs. We strive to ensure that all staff understand the society's vision and values, and support each other to achieve our mission.

Respect: We recognize diverse cultures, needs, and perspectives. We act with compassion, tolerance, and integrity in our relationships with our clients, community and justice system partners, and co-workers.

Service excellence: We engage stakeholders in the design of our services and evaluate our services to ensure that our clients are achieving the best possible outcomes. We recognize that the work of all LSS staff and partners contributes to service excellence.

Memorandum of Understanding

Under section 21 of the Legal Services Society Act, the society determines the range of services it will provide within the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) negotiated with the Attorney General every three years (see Financial Report, page 24). The MOU and the LSS Act guide the relationship between the society and the provincial government. The MOU:

- sets out the roles and responsibilities of both parties,
- outlines anticipated provincial government funding for legal aid and the priorities for allocating that funding,
- acknowledges that LSS receives funding from sources other than the government and can apply that funding in any manner that is appropriate to fulfilling its mandate, and
- establishes the foundation for the society's budget and planning process.

LSS core services

LSS offers a range of services that includes legal representation, advice, information, and education. Our innovative and collaborative service delivery reflects our commitment to our values.

LSS delivers in-person services at regional centres and through funded local agents across the province (see inside back cover for a list of offices). Private lawyers provide most of the legal representation services on referral from LSS. The society also contracts with lawyers and other organizations to deliver services such as duty counsel.

To help make sure legal aid is accessible to all communities, LSS offers phone services for people who cannot come to an office. The society also provides interpreters for phone clients and clients working with legal aid lawyers.

LSS provides legal representation for financially eligible people with serious family, child protection, and criminal law problems. It is also available for people who face a refugee or deportation hearing, Mental Health Review Panel or BC Review Board hearing, or prison issue for which the Charter of Rights and Freedoms establishes a right to counsel.

Legal advice is available to unrepresented people through:

- criminal, family, and immigration duty counsel in courthouses across BC;
- LawLINE, a toll-free telephone advice service;
- Brydges Line, an emergency phone service for people who have been or may be arrested; and
- family advice lawyers at various locations.

Most LSS advice services are subject to a financial eligibility test.

People who do not qualify for legal representation or advice can still get legal information. The society produces public legal education materials in print (many of which are available in other languages) and online. Legal information outreach workers, who work out of LSS regional centres, deliver in-person legal information support to clients and community agencies.

LSS offers training conferences and support for community advocates who work with LSS clients. LSS also collaborates with community and government agencies to ensure people with low incomes have access to the other services they need to solve their legal issues.

For data on the number of clients who used legal aid services in 2008/2009, please see Appendix 1 on page 42.

For more information about our legal aid services and eligibility criteria, please visit our website at www.lss.bc.ca (look under "Legal aid"). For a detailed profile of our services for clients and lawyers, including tariff rates and our client confidentiality policy, please read the fact sheets available on our website under "Media—Legal aid facts."

LSS clients

This year, hundreds of thousands of BC citizens received legal aid information, advice, and representation services. Legal aid clients are the province's most poor, vulnerable, and marginalized citizens. They cannot afford to hire a lawyer when their safety, freedom, or families are at risk. Of the 32,680 clients who were referred to a lawyer in 2008/2009, over 40% have less than a high school education and about 25% are Aboriginal. About 70% of clients who were referred to a lawyer and just over 40% of LawLINE callers this year were male. Women received about 30% of representation services and made 60% of the calls to LawLINE.

Governance

The society is governed by a nine-member board of directors. Under its bylaws, the board's role is "to ensure the effective governance of the society through setting direction, monitoring performance, and hiring and supporting the executive director."

LSS adheres to the governance principles established by the Board Resourcing and Development Office (BRDO) and is in full compliance with BRDO guidelines.

Board governance

The governance framework of the board consists of policies and bylaws that reflect established governance best practices. Of the nine board members:

- five are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Attorney General, and
- four are appointed by the Law Society of BC after consultation with the executive of the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association.

The LSS Act outlines the need for the board as a whole to have a range of knowledge, skills, and experience in such areas as:

- business management and the financial affairs of public and private sector organizations;
- law and the operation of courts, tribunals, and alternative dispute resolution processes;
- the provision of legal aid;
- BC's cultural and geographic diversity; and
- the social and economic circumstances associated with the special legal needs of people with low incomes.

At their first meeting in each fiscal year, the directors of the board elect a board chair and an Executive Committee. Headed by the board chair and consisting of at least two other board directors, the Executive Committee holds all the powers of the board between meetings except the power to fill vacancies on or alter the membership of board committees and specific powers excluded by resolution of the board.

The board also establishes two board committees to help it carry out its responsibilities. The chair, in consultation with the society's executive director, appoints the members of these committees, unless the board directs otherwise. The two committees are:

- Finance Committee, which makes recommendations on the society's finances, funding, and fiscal allocations.
- Stakeholder Engagement Committee, which recommends ways to strengthen the society's relationships with key stakeholders (see Glossary, page 52) in the justice system.

For more information about the LSS board and its governance practices, see the society's website at www.lss.bc.ca.

LSS board of directors (at March 31, 2009)

D.Mayland McKimm, QC, Chair (Victoria)	Executive Committee, Chair
Janice Comeau (Vancouver)	Finance Committee, Chair
Geoffrey Cowper, QC, Past Chair (Vancouver)	Board member
David Crossin, QC (Vancouver)	Executive Committee; Finance Committee
Larry Goble (Victoria)	Executive Committee; Stakeholder Engagement Committee
Bruce Hardy, Vice Chair (Surrey)	Executive Committee; Finance Committee
Deanna Ludowicz (Grand Forks)	Board member
Todd Ormiston (Victoria)	Stakeholder Engagement Committee
Richard Schwartz (Victoria)	Stakeholder Engagement Committee, Chair

Senior management

The board of directors appoints an executive director to administer the business of the society. The executive director chairs the society's Executive Management Committee (EMC), which is made up of the directors of the four internal LSS divisions. EMC provides LSS with overall strategic direction, policy, and planning.

EMC also makes final decisions on strategic and operational issues brought forward by the the Operations, Planning, and Policy Committee. This management committee advises EMC on interdivisional policy and planning, strategic and service planning, management initiatives, operational support issues, and policies for coverage, eligibility, and tariffs.

LSS senior management (at March 31, 2009)

Mark Benton, QC, Executive Director

Harold V.J. Clark, CHRP, Strategic Planning, Policy, and Human Resources

Sherry MacLennan, lawyer, Public Legal Information and Applications

Heidi Mason, lawyer, Legal Advice and Representation

Catherine McNeil, CA, Finance and Corporate Services

Joel Chamaschuk, Information Technology

Margaret Currie, lawyer, Audit and Investigation

Brad Daisley, lawyer, Communications

Corinne de Bruin, Policy (Rochelle Appleby, lawyer, Acting)

Noreen Finnerty, CHRP, Human Resources and Organizational Development (Christal Pendleton, Acting)

David Griffiths, lawyer, Criminal Law

Kyong-ae Kim, lawyer, Civil Law

Loraine Lundquist, Acting, Applications and Eligibility

Thomas Quine, Publishing Services and Operational Support

John Simpson, lawyer, Community Services

Kathryn Spracklin, Acting, Strategic Planning

Janice Staryk, Operations, Legal Advice and Representation

Eugene Wandell, CMA, Finance and Administration

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Directors

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Catherine McNeil, CA, Finance and Corporate Services

Senior managers

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Thomas Quine, Publishing Services and Operational Support

John Simpson, lawyer, Community Services

Kathryn Spracklin, Acting, Strategic Planning

Janice Staryk, Operations, Legal Advice and Representation

Eugene Wandell, CMA, Finance and Administration

Report on Performance

Report on Performance

LSS began this year by launching a series of projects and tariff measures to implement legal aid renewal, as laid out in our 2008/2009–2010/2011 service plan. Legal aid renewal means providing legal aid services that help clients achieve timely and lasting solutions to their legal problems. However, like many organizations across BC, the society shifted its focus in the second half of the year to managing accelerating demands for service, rising service costs, and changing expectations of future income from all sources as a result of the global economic downturn.

Over the past five years, LSS has used non-government revenue to fund innovative projects to meet critical needs for service. Anticipating significantly lower income from our foundation funders in 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, in 2008/2009 LSS reduced or cancelled legal aid renewal projects and other initiatives; reduced or eliminated some criminal, family and immigration services; reduced the tariffs paid to lawyers taking legal aid referrals; and laid off 16% of our workforce (as of April 30, 2009). The money realized from these reductions will be redirected to core legal aid services for our most vulnerable clients. LSS will also use these funds to offset rising case costs resulting from tariff improvements introduced in recent years to ensure sustainable and quality representation services.

Although LSS reduced the scale of its legal aid renewal projects in December 2008, activities carried out during the year — including the collaborative effort with the Ministry of Attorney General and other partners to open the Nanaimo Justice Access Centre and the Downtown Community Court in Vancouver — helped advance our legal aid renewal goals of clients' participation in resolving their own legal issues (Goal 2, page 15) and integrating services (Goal 3, page 16). LSS remains committed to the principles supporting legal aid renewal and to fulfilling our mission of providing innovative and collaborative legal aid services that enable our clients to effectively address their issues within the justice system. For an overview of our performance for 2008/2009, see table 3 on page 12.

Adjustments to the service plan

LSS made minor adjustments to its goals, strategies, and performance measures in 2008/2009 in response to the emerging economic crisis. These are reflected in our 2009/2010–2011/2012 service plan, available on the LSS website at www.lss.bc.ca. The changes are summarized in Appendix 2 on page 48. The goals, strategies, and measures in place for 2008/2009 are summarized in table 2 on pages 10–11.

Performance management and reporting system

LSS assesses performance by surveying key stakeholder groups. We hire independent contractors to conduct all surveys, and we continue to review and improve data sources to ensure reliability. The society also monitors and reports on key internal operational and financial data.

LSS elected to use satisfaction measures to track our overall progress in achieving intended outcomes for clients. These measures also track our success in engaging the support of private lawyers, who are our primary service partners; our employees, who are critical to service quality; and the public, to whom we are ultimately accountable. Increased levels of client and lawyer satisfaction, employee engagement, and public support will demonstrate that we are meeting the needs of all those who are directly affected by our work. LSS chose budget-to-actual expenditure variance as a measure of financial performance.

LSS set targets by considering benchmark data, calculating what would be a statistically significant change in a particular measure, and evaluating the level of improvement possible given the strategies in place and activities planned in the coming period. Meeting our targets would demonstrate continuous improvement in stakeholders' satisfaction with, support for, and use of our services, as well as financial responsibility, all of which are necessary to achieve our goals.

Improved performance will also increase public and government confidence that the society's work is helping people solve their legal problems. This will, in turn, enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of BC's justice system, reduce the burden on the social services sector, and contribute to sustaining key social values, including fairness, equality under the law, and compassion for those in need.

Key risks affecting performance

Fiscal circumstances presented the primary risk to the society's performance in 2008/2009. In our 2008/2009 service plan, LSS had identified as a risk not being able to sustain key initiatives due to insufficient revenue. However, like most organizations, we did not anticipate the precipitous decline in the economy. The impact of a recession on future revenue and the increasing demand for services pose a significant risk to the society's ability to meet clients' legal needs and support the efficient operation of the courts.

Further, not all risks identified in the 2008/2009 service plan had an effect on our performance this year. For example, recruitment and retention issues generated by a buoyant economy diminished as the economy slowed, and justice system changes did not significantly impact our resources. Table 1 (below) summarizes the risks faced by LSS in 2008/2009 and the principal steps taken this year to mitigate them.

Table 1 Key risks, 2008/2009

Fiscal circumstances		
▪ A worsening economy reduced the society's income from non-government sources this year. ▪ Reserve funds and non-government revenue support both pilot projects and core services. ▪ The worsening economy may lead to increased demand for legal aid services amongst BC's most vulnerable citizens. ▪ Longer, more complex cases and tariff improvements to sustain lawyer supply are contributing to higher case costs.	▪ The society has insufficient revenue to meet current service demands, requiring LSS to reduce services and serve fewer clients. ▪ Demand for legal aid rises significantly beyond current levels, resulting in service costs that exceed budget in future periods.	▪ LSS cut staff and less essential services to redirect resources to core services. ▪ LSS significantly reduced spending on legal aid renewal projects. ▪ LSS used reserve funds to sustain critical services through year-end. ▪ LSS began developing processes to improve forecasting, better track expenditures, and improve data reporting and analysis to guide business decisions. (See Goal 4, page 18, and Financial Report, page 24)
Capacity		
▪ Managing increasing demand with decreasing revenue requires significant time, resources, and cross-departmental collaboration. ▪ Preparing for restructuring diverts time and resources away from service provision and essential management tasks. ▪ Implementing staff and service cuts undermines morale.	▪ The capacity of LSS staff and management is stretched, undermining our ability to deliver services to clients.	▪ To help sustain LSS capacity, LSS is providing change management support for managers and staff and is continuing employee and leadership development programs. (See Goal 4, page 18)

Table 1 Key risks, 2008/2009		
Issue	**Risks**	**Key responses**
Lawyer recruitment and retention		
• Legal aid plans across Canada continue to face lawyer attrition and greying of the private bar.	• Demographics and attrition threaten lawyer supply, resulting in LSS being unable to provide representation for every eligible client.	• LSS launched a project to pilot strategies to attract and retain lawyers, with reduced scope due to fiscal constraints. • LSS introduced tariff measures to encourage articled student involvement in legal aid work. (See Goal 4, page 21)
Integrated approach		
• As part of legal aid renewal, LSS is piloting projects that will enable LSS and other service providers to work together to help clients address their legal needs in a broad social context.	• The society's reliance on partner agencies to pilot an integrated approach may lead to failure of the model if partners have insufficient human/financial resources or different mandates.	• LSS worked with justice system partners on the Justice Access Centre and Downtown Community Court projects, which are piloting the integrated justice model. (See Goal 3, page 16) • LSS significantly reduced budgets for legal aid renewal projects in response to fiscal constraints. • LSS communications and outreach initiatives promote the need for sustainable funding for legal aid and health/social services, and the benefits of taking an integrated approach. (See Goal 1, page 13, and Goal 4, page 22)
Public awareness and support		
• Public support for legal aid remains high (94% in March 2009), and a majority of BC residents believe current funding levels are inadequate. However, this level of support has not resulted in sufficient funding to sustain legal aid services.	• Lack of recognition of strong public support for legal aid services limits the society's access to public funding and the ability to promote justice reform.	• LSS continues to build support for legal aid among elected and public officials and other community leaders. (See Goal 4, page 22) • Communications, outreach, and collaborative projects help build awareness of and support for legal aid in client communities and the public. (See Goal 1, page 13)

Improved performance will also increase public and government confidence that the society's work is helping people solve their legal problems. This will, in turn, enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of BC's justice system, reduce the burden on the social services sector, and contribute to sustaining key social values, including fairness, equality under the law, and compassion for those in need.

Key risks affecting performance

Fiscal circumstances presented the primary risk to the society's performance in 2008/2009. In our 2008/2009 service plan, LSS had identified as a risk not being able to sustain key initiatives due to insufficient revenue. However, like most organizations, we did not anticipate the precipitous decline in the economy. The impact of a recession on future revenue and the increasing demand for services pose a significant risk to the society's ability to meet clients' legal needs and support the efficient operation of the courts.

Further, not all risks identified in the 2008/2009 service plan had an effect on our performance this year. For example, recruitment and retention issues generated by a buoyant economy diminished as the economy slowed, and justice system changes did not significantly impact our resources. Table 1 (below) summarizes the risks faced by LSS in 2008/2009 and the principal steps taken this year to mitigate them.

Table 1 Key risks, 2008/2009

Issue	Risks	Key responses
Fiscal circumstances		
▪ A worsening economy reduced the society's income from non-government sources this year. ▪ Reserve funds and non-government revenue support both pilot projects and core services. ▪ The worsening economy may lead to increased demand for legal aid services amongst BC's most vulnerable citizens. ▪ Longer, more complex cases and tariff improvements to sustain lawyer supply are contributing to higher case costs.	▪ The society has insufficient revenue to meet current service demands, requiring LSS to reduce services and serve fewer clients. ▪ Demand for legal aid rises significantly beyond current levels, resulting in service costs that exceed budget in future periods.	▪ LSS cut staff and less essential services to redirect resources to core services. ▪ LSS significantly reduced spending on legal aid renewal projects. ▪ LSS used reserve funds to sustain critical services through year-end. ▪ LSS began developing processes to improve forecasting, better track expenditures, and improve data reporting and analysis to guide business decisions. (See Goal 4, page 18, and Financial Report, page 24)
Capacity		
▪ Managing increasing demand with decreasing revenue requires significant time, resources, and cross-departmental collaboration. ▪ Preparing for restructuring diverts time and resources away from service provision and essential management tasks. ▪ Implementing staff and service cuts undermines morale.	▪ The capacity of LSS staff and management is stretched, undermining our ability to deliver services to clients.	▪ To help sustain LSS capacity, LSS is providing change management support for managers and staff and is continuing employee and leadership development programs. (See Goal 4, page 18)

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Issue	**Risks**	**Key responses**
Lawyer recruitment and retention		
▪ Legal aid plans across Canada continue to face lawyer attrition and greying of the private bar.	▪ Demographics and attrition threaten lawyer supply, resulting in LSS being unable to provide representation for every eligible client.	▪ LSS launched a project to pilot strategies to attract and retain lawyers, with reduced scope due to fiscal constraints. ▪ LSS introduced tariff measures to encourage articled student involvement in legal aid work. (See Goal 4, page 21)
Integrated approach		
▪ As part of legal aid renewal, LSS is piloting projects that will enable LSS and other service providers to work together to help clients address their legal needs in a broad social context.	▪ The society's reliance on partner agencies to pilot an integrated approach may lead to failure of the model if partners have insufficient human/financial resources or different mandates.	▪ LSS worked with justice system partners on the Justice Access Centre and Downtown Community Court projects, which are piloting the integrated justice model. (See Goal 3, page 16) ▪ LSS significantly reduced budgets for legal aid renewal projects in response to fiscal constraints. ▪ LSS communications and outreach initiatives promote the need for sustainable funding for legal aid and health/social services, and the benefits of taking an integrated approach. (See Goal 1, page 13, and Goal 4, page 22)
Public awareness and support		
▪ Public support for legal aid remains high (94% in March 2009), and a majority of BC residents believe current funding levels are inadequate. However, this level of support has not resulted in sufficient funding to sustain legal aid services.	▪ Lack of recognition of strong public support for legal aid services limits the society's access to public funding and the ability to promote justice reform.	▪ LSS continues to build support for legal aid among elected and public officials and other community leaders. (See Goal 4, page 22) ▪ Communications, outreach, and collaborative projects help build awareness of and support for legal aid in client communities and the public. (See Goal 1, page 13)

Table 2	Goals, strategies, and performance measures, 2008/2009–2010/2011		
1	People with low incomes who have legal issues use LSS services.	• Increase use of LSS services by building public awareness through advertising and other promotional and outreach activities. • Collaborate with other agencies to house legal aid application, information, advice, and referral services in locations accessible to people with low incomes. • Review coverage and financial eligibility rules regularly to ensure people with low incomes have access to needed services. • Pilot new projects for Aboriginal clients while also making current LSS programs more culturally appropriate for them. • Use technology and multiple media to create services that are accessible and culturally appropriate for diverse client groups across BC. • Consult with client groups and intermediaries in the design and delivery of LSS services.	• Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services (tri-annual survey) • Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services (tri-annual survey)
2	People with low incomes participate in solving and avoiding legal issues.	• Integrate application and information services to ensure clients receive basic information about legal aid services and their rights early in the process. • Pilot training programs to help clients build the skills necessary to participate in solving their legal issues. • Provide access to resources for lawyers and intermediaries to help them engage clients in solving their legal issues. • Provide access to resources for lawyers and intermediaries about alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and their benefits for clients.	• Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers who say they are willing to take alternative dispute resolution referrals (tri-annual survey)

Table 2	Goals, strategies, and performance measures, 2008/2009–2010/2011		
3	People with low incomes get help with non-legal issues so they can solve and avoid legal issues.	• Partner, co-locate, and coordinate with other service providers to increase clients' access to services for their related issues, and to identify best practices in integrating services. • Provide access to resources to lawyers and intermediaries to increase their knowledge of poverty, health, and other related issues, and the resources available to clients. • Expand services to address clients' related legal issues. • Communicate the value of the integrated approach to lawyers, intermediaries, the public, and justice system partners.	• Percent of clients who say LSS informed them about services to address their related issues (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related issues (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services (tri-annual survey)
4	LSS manages resources soundly to ensure clients have access to quality legal aid services that are proportionate to their needs.	• Enhance staff recruitment, retention, and succession programs. • Implement capacity management initiatives to address staff workload and to improve resource allocations. • Implement a lawyer recruitment strategy that includes a focus on articling students, new lawyers, and lawyers in remote locations. • Implement a regular assessment process for tariffs to ensure rates and structures are aligned with lawyers' needs and desired client outcomes. • Enhance the quality of lawyer services to clients. • Develop and implement an internal review plan. • Improve accuracy of financial forecasts and reports through management training and an enhanced financial system. • Build public and political support for legal aid services.	• Overall employee engagement score (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS (tri-annual survey) • Number of new lawyers taking more than five referrals/year (annual measure) • Budget-to-actual expenditure variance (annual measure) • Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services (annual survey)

Table 2 Goals, strategies, and performance measures, 2008/2009–2010/2011			
	Goals	Strategies	Measures
1	People with low incomes who have legal issues use LSS services.	• Increase use of LSS services by building public awareness through advertising and other promotional and outreach activities. • Collaborate with other agencies to house legal aid application, information, advice, and referral services in locations accessible to people with low incomes. • Review coverage and financial eligibility rules regularly to ensure people with low incomes have access to needed services. • Pilot new projects for Aboriginal clients while also making current LSS programs more culturally appropriate for them. • Use technology and multiple media to create services that are accessible and culturally appropriate for diverse client groups across BC. • Consult with client groups and intermediaries in the design and delivery of LSS services.	• Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services (tri-annual survey) • Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services (tri-annual survey)
2	People with low incomes participate in solving and avoiding legal issues.	• Integrate application and information services to ensure clients receive basic information about legal aid services and their rights early in the process. • Pilot training programs to help clients build the skills necessary to participate in solving their legal issues. • Provide access to resources for lawyers and intermediaries to help them engage clients in solving their legal issues. • Provide access to resources for lawyers and intermediaries about alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and their benefits for clients.	• Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues (tri-annual survey) • Percent of lawyers who say they are willing to take alternative dispute resolution referrals (tri-annual survey)

Table 2 Goals, strategies, and performance measures, 2008/2009–2010/2011		
Goals	**Strategies**	**Measures**
3 People with low incomes get help with non-legal issues so they can solve and avoid legal issues.	▪ Partner, co-locate, and coordinate with other service providers to increase clients' access to services for their related issues, and to identify best practices in integrating services. ▪ Provide access to resources to lawyers and intermediaries to increase their knowledge of poverty, health, and other related issues, and the resources available to clients. ▪ Expand services to address clients' related legal issues. ▪ Communicate the value of the integrated approach to lawyers, intermediaries, the public, and justice system partners.	▪ Percent of clients who say LSS informed them about services to address their related issues (tri-annual survey) ▪ Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related issues (tri-annual survey) ▪ Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services (tri-annual survey)
4 LSS manages resources soundly to ensure clients have access to quality legal aid services that are proportionate to their needs.	▪ Enhance staff recruitment, retention, and succession programs. ▪ Implement capacity management initiatives to address staff workload and to improve resource allocations. ▪ Implement a lawyer recruitment strategy that includes a focus on articling students, new lawyers, and lawyers in remote locations. ▪ Implement a regular assessment process for tariffs to ensure rates and structures are aligned with lawyers' needs and desired client outcomes. ▪ Enhance the quality of lawyer services to clients. ▪ Develop and implement an internal review plan. ▪ Improve accuracy of financial forecasts and reports through management training and an enhanced financial system. ▪ Build public and political support for legal aid services.	▪ Overall employee engagement score (tri-annual survey) ▪ Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS (tri-annual survey) ▪ Number of new lawyers taking more than five referrals/year (annual measure) ▪ Budget-to-actual expenditure variance (annual measure) ▪ Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services (annual survey)

Table 3 Performance at a glance

Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services (Goal 1)	66% baseline set	Not measured	Not measured	70%
Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services (Goal 1)	65% baseline set	Not measured	Not measured	69%
Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues (Goal 2)	n/a (New for 2010/2011)	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set
Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues (Goal 2)	n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured
Percent of clients who say LSS informed them about services to address their related issues (Goal 3)	n/a (New for 2010/2011)	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set
Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related issues (Goal 3)	n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured
Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services (Goal 3)	n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured
Overall employee engagement score (Goal 4)	70 (average score) (Baseline set 2004/2005: 72%)	Not measured	Not measured	73
Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS (Goal 4)	Not measured (75% of tariff lawyers satisfied in 2006/2007)	Not measured	84%	Not measured
Number of new lawyers taking more than five referrals/year (Goal 4)	64 (baseline set)	Target (>64) met: 67 lawyers	>64	To be determined
Budget-to-actual expenditure variance (Goal 4)	-2.7% variance (Baseline set 2005: 3.9%)	Target (1.5%) met: -0.17% variance	1.5%	1.5%
Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services (Goal 4)	93% public support (Baseline set 2005: 89%)	Target (>90%) met: 94% public support	>90%	>90%

Table 3 Performance at a glance				
Measure	Past results 2007/2008	Results 2008/2009	Future targets 2009/2010	2010/2011
Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services (Goal 1)	66% baseline set	Not measured	Not measured	70%
Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services (Goal 1)	65% baseline set	Not measured	Not measured	69%
Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues (Goal 2)	n/a (New for 2010/2011)	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set
Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues (Goal 2)	n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured
Percent of clients who say LSS informed them about services to address their related issues (Goal 3)	n/a (New for 2010/2011)	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set
Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related issues (Goal 3)	n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured
Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services (Goal 3)	n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured
Overall employee engagement score (Goal 4)	70 (average score) (Baseline set 2004/2005: 72%)	Not measured	Not measured	73
Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS (Goal 4)	Not measured (75% of tariff lawyers satisfied in 2006/2007)	Not measured	84%	Not measured
Number of new lawyers taking more than five referrals/year (Goal 4)	64 (baseline set)	Target (>64) met: 67 lawyers	>64	To be determined
Budget-to-actual expenditure variance (Goal 4)	-2.7% variance (Baseline set 2005: 3.9%)	Target (1.5%) met: -0.17% variance	1.5%	1.5%
Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services (Goal 4)	93% public support (Baseline set 2005: 89%)	Target (>90%) met: 94% public support	>90%	>90%

Goal 1

People with low incomes who have legal issues use LSS services.

This goal recognizes that potential clients must use legal aid services for the society to help them resolve their legal issues. It is tied directly to client awareness, service accessibility, and service effectiveness. To meet our mandate and mission, LSS must not only provide appropriate services but also deliver them effectively to clients.

Performance measures:

- Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services.
- Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services.

Results 2008/2009

LSS surveys clients every three years. For results from the 2007/2008 client survey and information about the importance of these measures, our benchmarks, and the data source, please see table 3 on page 12 and Appendix 3 on page 49. We will conduct our next client survey in 2010/2011.

Performance highlights

LSS efforts to build public and intermediary awareness of legal aid services continued throughout 2008/2009. The society's advertising campaign supplemented ongoing activities in the community by our field and outreach workers, staff lawyers, and our Aboriginal Services program manager. LSS also augmented legal aid services in the northwest of BC by expanding our Terrace Regional Centre office, with a particular focus on outreach to the Aboriginal community and family services. New electronic media services were also piloted.

Increase use of LSS services by building public awareness

- LSS continued its advertising campaign this year, running public transit ads in Metro Vancouver and Victoria, and public service announcements on radio and television stations throughout BC.
- As part of their ongoing outreach activities, the society's fieldworkers, legal information outreach workers, and staff lawyers presented community workshops on LSS services and liaised with local advocates, community and government agencies, and the private bar.

Increase access to legal aid services through collaboration, eligibility

- Collaborating with our service partners is integral to our service delivery model. The society's participation with the Ministry of Attorney General and other partners at the Nanaimo Justice Access Centre (JAC) and the Vancouver Downtown Community Court (DCC) this year ensures legal aid services are available for our clients at these key access points to the justice system. The JAC and DCC projects also advance our legal aid renewal goals of client participation and service integration. For more on these projects, see Goal 3, page 16.
- On April 1, 2008, LSS introduced the first cost of living adjustment (of 3.2%) to its financial eligibility rates to protect clients from becoming ineligible due to inflation. LSS plans to review the financial eligibility rates annually and, if funds are available, adjust them as necessary. Eligibility rates were not increased on April 1, 2009, due to financial constraints.

Pilot new projects, improve LSS programs for Aboriginal peoples

- In the first full year of the society's project to improve access to legal aid and pilot new service models for Aboriginal clients, LSS held consultations in Aboriginal communities across BC, began development of projects in Port Hardy and Williams Lake, and participated in the Nanaimo JAC. The Aboriginal community legal worker with the Nanaimo JAC, for example, has secured office space at Snuneymuxw and Tillicum Haus in Nanaimo to enhance outreach. The project also created new public legal education materials for the Aboriginal community in print and online, and helped coordinate a Continuing Legal Education program on child apprehension for lawyers and advocates. To ensure we provide services that will achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal communities, the Aboriginal Legal Services Project engages Aboriginal organizations in each stage of service development, from project selection to delivery.

- BC's northwest region has a significant Aboriginal population and chronic lawyer supply problems. With additional funding from the Notary Foundation, LSS added a family lawyer to the Terrace Regional Centre to help improve legal aid services for local Aboriginal communities and is exploring hiring an Aboriginal community legal worker.

Use technology to create accessible and culturally appropriate services

- In summer 2008, LSS implemented a "telephone triage" model that allows intake staff to assess and direct all phone clients to the appropriate legal aid service. As a result, wait times for callers have reduced dramatically. In 2009/2010, LSS will evaluate the effectiveness of this model for clients (see Goal 2, page 15).
- Results of the society's project with the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association to test the viability of providing electronic legal aid applications in circuit court were released this year. Findings indicated that the model was not optimal in communities with low Internet access. LSS is now investigating other ways to use technology to increase access to legal aid applications in remote communities.
- LSS continued to add multicultural and alternative format public legal education and information (PLEI) materials to its family law and organizational websites this year. We also began an evaluation of our video materials to determine how effectively they deliver information to clients. Results from an ongoing online survey of users of the society's family law and organizational websites (about 300 users respond per site each month) indicate that satisfaction and task completion rates are high (over 65%) for users seeking information about the law or legal aid services. User comments emphasize that the sites provide easy and immediate access to needed information about the law in BC in language they can understand.
- The society is part of a collaborative project with our criminal justice system partners to make bail hearings more effective and efficient by using videoconferencing technology. Co-sponsored by the BC Criminal Justice Reform Secretariat and the Provincial Court of BC, the bail reform project was launched in six locations across the province this year and will continue in 2009/2010.

Future outlook

In the coming period, the society will closely monitor client demand, case costs, and client outcomes to maximize the cost-benefit of the services we provide. LSS plans to expand its internal evaluation of projects and ongoing services to ascertain whether intended client outcomes are being met and to guide improvements and efficiencies.

Collaborating with service partners and using new technologies offer increasingly important strategies to deliver accessible, effective legal aid to the clients most in need. For example, in 2009, we are piloting the use of "telephone advice lawyers." Eligible clients calling LSS can be seamlessly connected to a community-based lawyer who can provide family advice services over the phone. Next year, we will also enhance distribution of our PLEI materials through the Internet, community agencies, and other channels to make these resources more accessible. The managing lawyers in our regional centres also plan to expand their outreach activities to the private bar and other service partners in 2009/2010.

Goal 2

People with low incomes participate in solving and avoiding legal issues.

Goal 2 recognizes that clients who are actively involved in resolving their legal issues tend to find more positive and stable solutions. This goal represents an important element in legal aid renewal, which focuses on achieving lasting client outcomes through an integrated approach to providing legal aid services that support the whole client.

Performance measures:

- Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues.
- Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues.

Results 2008/2009

LSS introduced these measures in our service plan for this year. Initial results will be collected when we next survey lawyers (2009/2010) and clients (2010/2011). For information about the importance of these measures, our benchmarks, and the data sources, please see Appendix 3 on page 49.

Performance highlights

LSS began implementation of legal aid renewal projects and made service changes in 2008/2009 designed to advance this goal, though this work was limited by significant reductions in project budgets and redirection of resources to core services in December 2008. However, the society and its justice and community partners took important steps this year toward establishing an integrated approach to service delivery.

Integrate application and information services

- Providing clients with enhanced access to information, advice, and referral services is an important part of the society's integrated telephone services model (see "Legal advice," page 43) launched in summer 2008. Intake legal assistants, the first point of contact for our phone clients, take legal aid applications, transfer calls to LawLINE for legal advice, or provide immediate information and referrals to outside agencies. For more detailed information needs, callers are connected to an LSS legal information outreach worker (LIOW) who can guide them through a range of resources. Clients applying in person also receive legal information and, at LSS regional centres, can get support from an LIOW.

Support lawyers and intermediaries to engage clients, use alternative dispute resolution

- Pilot tariff measures introduced under the society's Integrated Civil/Family Law Services Project support lawyers in child protection cases to seek collaborative solutions for their clients where possible. LSS will evaluate the efficacy and cost of these measures to determine if they will be continued after project end.
- Staff lawyers' community outreach activities this year helped intermediaries support clients to work effectively with their lawyers to resolve their issues. Advocates often provide clients with the practical and emotional support they need to participate meaningfully in the process. On a broader level, outreach events empower the local community as a whole to access justice.
- The joint initiative between LSS, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and the Ministry of Attorney General to expand alternative dispute resolution in child protection proceedings across BC continued in 2008/2009 with the addition of two new projects. LSS has been coordinating this initiative since it began in 2003 (for more information, see Glossary, page 52).
- In September 2008, the Aboriginal Legal Services Project hosted 100 people representing 35 tribes at a three-day conference in New Westminster on child protection and welfare. Sessions were intended to empower and inform advocates, lawyers, and community workers, as well as families, about the legal rights of First Nations people in this context.

Future outlook

LSS significantly reduced the scope and budget for its legal aid renewal projects in 2009/2010 to redirect those funds to core legal aid services. However, enhancing the ability of our front line staff and service providers to engage clients in resolving their issues will be an ongoing element in our service delivery model. For example, training for intake staff about our information resources will be further enhanced in 2009/2010 so that they can provide clients with the information they need to start taking action on their issue from first contact with the society. Increasing the level of outreach from all regional centres is also a priority for 2009/2010.

Goal 3

People with low incomes get help with non-legal issues so they can solve and avoid legal issues.

Goal 3 recognizes that clients' legal problems often arise from or trigger other problems, including unemployment, mental health, or addiction issues. By working with other service providers to help clients get support for these issues, LSS can improve client outcomes as well as reduce the use of justice, health, and social services over the long term.

Performance measures:

- Percent of clients who say LSS informed them about services to address their related issues.
- Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related issues.
- Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services.

Results 2008/2009

LSS introduced these measures in our service plan for this year. Initial results will be collected when we next survey lawyers (2009/2010) and clients (2010/2011). For information about the importance of these measures, our benchmarks, and the data sources, please see Appendix 3 on page 49.

Performance highlights

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Increase client access to support for related issues by integrating services

- In October 2008, LSS and the Ministry of Attorney General officially opened the Nanaimo Justice Access Centre (JAC), a collaborative project to test the impact on client outcomes of providing a single location where people can get a range of information, advice, and other services for civil and family law problems. The JAC, which is funded in part by the Law Foundation, is also designed to identify and refer clients to services that can address their related non-legal issues.
- LSS supplies telephone intake and in-person duty counsel services at the Vancouver Downtown Community Court (DCC), a problem-solving court that aims to support earlier resolutions of criminal cases in part by providing clients with access to justice, health, and social services at the court location. This integrated justice model makes effective use of available resources and, by helping offenders address their related issues, gives them a better chance at becoming contributing members of society. The DCC won a Premier's Innovation and Excellence Award in the "cross government integration" category for bringing together justice, health, and social services.

Increase lawyer and intermediary knowledge of clients' related issues

- As part of the Integrated Civil/Family Law Services Project this year, LSS began developing a Poverty Law Primer, a basic handbook on poverty law for lawyers who do not usually practise in this area of law. The primer will be ready for distribution in 2009. With a significant reduction in the project budget, plans to create other resources for lawyers and intermediaries have been postponed.

- Nearly 100 family duty counsel from across BC participated in a two-day conference in October 2008 focusing on introducing holistic practice to family law. The conference, hosted by LSS as part of the Integrated Civil/Family Law Services Project, featured 20 presenters including representatives of the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Children's and Women's Health Centre of BC. The society's annual Provincial Training Conference for Legal Advocates, co-sponsored by the Law Foundation, provided workshops and training sessions in November on topics from welfare to housing for over 100 attendees. LSS conferences are recognized as critical skill-building and networking opportunities for service providers.
- The society's Community Advocate Support Line, a pilot phone service funded by the Law Foundation, provides information and advice on poverty and family law for advocates across BC, who in turn help their clients address these issues.

Expand services to address clients' related legal issues

- In early 2008/2009, LSS introduced tariff changes to encourage lawyers to address collateral issues in Child, Family and Community Service Act cases as part of the Integrated Civil/Family Law Services Project. LSS will assess the efficacy and cost of these measures to determine if they can be sustained after project end.

Future outlook

As part of the Integrated Criminal Services Project, LSS will pilot an extended criminal duty counsel service in Kelowna in June 2009 to help clients resolve specific issues such as breach charges. Extended duty counsel would fill a gap in criminal representation coverage created by the recent reduction in services. Another project initiative for 2009/2010 is a training conference for criminal duty counsel focusing on best practices to help clients address related issues.

In late 2009, LSS will open a new, street-level legal aid office within a BC Housing building in New Westminster that will operate under the integrated justice model. By "co-locating" or integrating services, LSS and BC Housing will facilitate access to legal aid and housing support for our mutual clients. Funding from the Law Foundation will enable LSS to provide additional services at this location including enhanced intake and legal information services, civil and family advice lawyers, and limited civil law services. To further integrate services and increase access to legal aid in the region, the new office plans to partner with local community agencies to provide legal aid intake and information services within agency offices.

LSS will also expand intake and introduce LIOW services for family and youth clients at Robson Square in Vancouver as part of a new justice access centre (JAC) opening at that location in early 2009/2010. The society's current family services at the Robson Square Courthouse will become part of the Vancouver JAC.

Goal 4

LSS manages resources soundly to ensure clients have access to quality legal aid services that are proportionate to their needs.

Goal 4 recognizes that LSS must effectively manage resources to fulfill our mission and vision. This goal also identifies LSS employees as one of the organization's key strengths; highlights the importance of sound financial forecasting, accounting, and auditing processes; and emphasizes our accountability for administering public resources.

Performance measure: Overall employee engagement score.

Past results		Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2004/2005	2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
Baseline set: 72%	70 (average score)*	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	73

This measure is a composite rating that includes employee commitment, job satisfaction, and organization satisfaction. It measures the society's performance in providing employees with the resources necessary to perform their duties, to develop their skills, and to contribute to the society's goals.

Importance of this measure

Research indicates that a high level of employee engagement is related to improved service for clients. Engaged employees are also more likely to stay with the organization. Increasing our engagement score over time will show that we are enhancing our ability to retain highly skilled employees and, in turn, to provide quality legal aid services efficiently.

Benchmark comparison

LSS benchmarks its employee engagement score against the BC Public Service using data provided by BC Stats. The society's 2008 overall engagement score of 70 exceeds the 2008 BC Stats benchmark of 66. LSS also scored higher than the benchmark on 14 out of 15 of the engagement model "drivers" or workplace concepts. BC Stats administers a Work Environment Survey to all BC Public Service employees annually—the same survey that BC Stats administered at LSS. The work environment at LSS, as a crown agency, shares important characteristics with the work environment experienced by the BC Public Service, making the comparison relevant.

Data source

Data is gathered from a tri-annual online Work Environment Survey conducted by BC Stats. 89% of LSS employees participated in the March 2008 survey. BC Stats made significant changes in the questionnaire since first measuring LSS employee engagement in 2005, and now presents the engagement score as an "average score."* As the 2005 score was a percentage score, the two results are not directly comparable.

* An "average score" is a single number that expresses all the responses to a survey question and is ideal for comparing results between organizations. In contrast, a percentage score shows the proportion of employees who agreed, disagreed, or gave a neutral response. This presents the range of opinion on a question and is useful for internal analysis.

Results 2008/2009

The results of the 2008 Work Environment Survey, conducted in March of that year, reflect our performance for 2007/2008. However, as we did not receive the data in time for inclusion in the 2007/2008 report, we are providing the highlights here. The 2008 survey results demonstrate one of the society's core strengths: our dedication to working together to help our clients. Teamwork (75), respectful environment (77), physical environment and tools (76), and vision, mission, and goals (74) received the highest scores. Though not directly comparable with 2005, the results also suggested improvements in employees' perception of management, staffing practices, and professional development, and identified areas for LSS to address, including stress and workload.

Performance measure:

- Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS.

This measure shows the degree to which lawyers taking legal aid referrals are satisfied with how LSS supports them in providing services to legal aid clients.

Results 2008/2009

LSS did not survey lawyers this year. For results from the 2006/2007 lawyer survey and information about the importance of these measures, our benchmarks, and the data source, please see table 3 on page 12 and Appendix 3 on page 49. We will conduct our next lawyer survey in 2009/2010.

Performance measures: Number of new lawyers taking more than five referrals/year.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
64 lawyers (baseline set)	>64	67	>64	To be determined

This measure shows the number of "new" lawyers (lawyers approved within the last two years to take legal aid cases) who accepted more than five legal aid referrals during 2008/2009.

Importance of this measure

Legal aid plans across Canada continue to face a decline in the number of lawyers willing to take legal aid referrals and the overall "greying" of the profession. In response, LSS has introduced a variety of measures to recruit and retain lawyers to do legal aid work. This measure tracks the society's success not only in recruiting lawyers but also in supporting their commitment to legal aid. An increasing number of lawyers who accept at least five referrals a year at the beginning of their legal aid career may indicate that LSS is building a supply of dedicated legal aid lawyers.

Benchmark comparison

LSS is unaware of benchmark data for this measure.

Data source

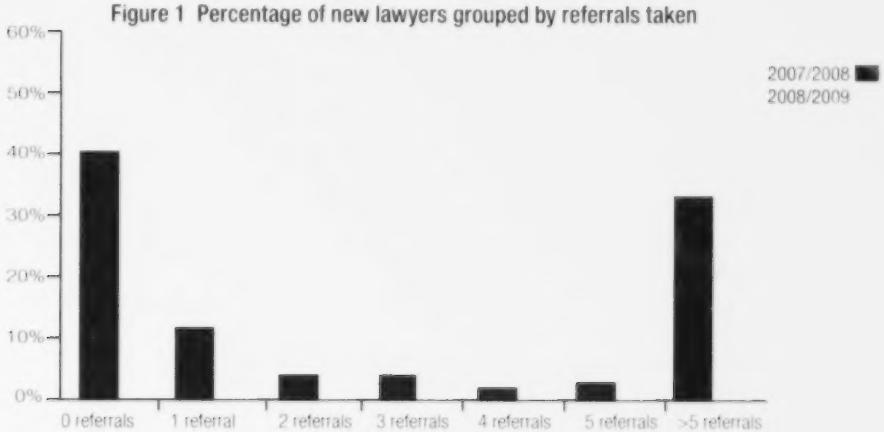
Data comes from the society's case management system database.

Results 2008/2009

LSS would like to increase the number of referrals accepted each year by lawyers new to taking legal aid cases. In 2008/2009, 67 lawyers (or 56% of lawyers new to legal aid) accepted more than five referrals in 2008/2009, surpassing our baseline of 64 lawyers set in 2007/2008 which represented 35% of total new lawyers (see figure 1). However, it is important to note that the total number of lawyers new to legal aid in the previous two fiscal years dropped from 182 in 2007/2008 to 120 in 2008/2009. To ensure clients have access to representation services, LSS is taking steps to support lawyers so that they make a sustained commitment to legal aid, with a special focus on lawyers beginning their legal aid career.

The total number of private lawyers taking referrals this year rose by 5.6% to 953 from 902 in 2007/2008. This is the first increase following five years of declines of approximately 3 to 4% per year.

Figure 1 Percentage of new lawyers grouped by referrals taken



Goal 4

LSS manages resources soundly to ensure clients have access to quality legal aid services that are proportionate to their needs.

Goal 4 recognizes that LSS must effectively manage resources to fulfill our mission and vision. This goal also identifies LSS employees as one of the organization's key strengths; highlights the importance of sound financial forecasting, accounting, and auditing processes; and emphasizes our accountability for administering public resources.

Performance measure: Overall employee engagement score.

Past results		Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2004/2005	2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
Baseline set: 72%	70 (average score)*	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	73

This measure is a composite rating that includes employee commitment, job satisfaction, and organization satisfaction. It measures the society's performance in providing employees with the resources necessary to perform their duties, to develop their skills, and to contribute to the society's goals.

Importance of this measure

Research indicates that a high level of employee engagement is related to improved service for clients. Engaged employees are also more likely to stay with the organization. Increasing our engagement score over time will show that we are enhancing our ability to retain highly skilled employees and, in turn, to provide quality legal aid services efficiently.

Benchmark comparison

LSS benchmarks its employee engagement score against the BC Public Service using data provided by BC Stats. The society's 2008 overall engagement score of 70 exceeds the 2008 BC Stats benchmark of 66. LSS also scored higher than the benchmark on 14 out of 15 of the engagement model "drivers" or workplace concepts. BC Stats administers a Work Environment Survey to all BC Public Service employees annually—the same survey that BC Stats administered at LSS. The work environment at LSS, as a crown agency, shares important characteristics with the work environment experienced by the BC Public Service, making the comparison relevant.

Data source

Data is gathered from a tri-annual online Work Environment Survey conducted by BC Stats. 89% of LSS employees participated in the March 2008 survey. BC Stats made significant changes in the questionnaire since first measuring LSS employee engagement in 2005, and now presents the engagement score as an "average score."* As the 2005 score was a percentage score, the two results are not directly comparable.

* An "average score" is a single number that expresses all the responses to a survey question and is ideal for comparing results between organizations. In contrast, a percentage score shows the proportion of employees who agreed, disagreed, or gave a neutral response. This presents the range of opinion on a question and is useful for internal analysis.

Results 2008/2009

The results of the 2008 Work Environment Survey, conducted in March of that year, reflect our performance for 2007/2008. However, as we did not receive the data in time for inclusion in the 2007/2008 report, we are providing the highlights here. The 2008 survey results demonstrate one of the society's core strengths: our dedication to working together to help our clients. Teamwork (75), respectful environment (77), physical environment and tools (76), and vision, mission, and goals (74) received the highest scores. Though not directly comparable with 2005, the results also suggested improvements in employees' perception of management, staffing practices, and professional development, and identified areas for LSS to address, including stress and workload.

Performance measure:

- Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS.

This measure shows the degree to which lawyers taking legal aid referrals are satisfied with how LSS supports them in providing services to legal aid clients.

Results 2008/2009

LSS did not survey lawyers this year. For results from the 2006/2007 lawyer survey and information about the importance of these measures, our benchmarks, and the data source, please see table 3 on page 12 and Appendix 3 on page 49. We will conduct our next lawyer survey in 2009/2010.

Performance measures: Number of new lawyers taking more than five referrals/year.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2007/2008	**Target**	**Actual**	**2009/2010**	**2010/2011**
64 lawyers (baseline set)	>64	67	>64	To be determined

This measure shows the number of "new" lawyers (lawyers approved within the last two years to take legal aid cases) who accepted more than five legal aid referrals during 2008/2009.

Importance of this measure

Legal aid plans across Canada continue to face a decline in the number of lawyers willing to take legal aid referrals and the overall "greying" of the profession. In response, LSS has introduced a variety of measures to recruit and retain lawyers to do legal aid work. This measure tracks the society's success not only in recruiting lawyers but also in supporting their commitment to legal aid. An increasing number of lawyers who accept at least five referrals a year at the beginning of their legal aid career may indicate that LSS is building a supply of dedicated legal aid lawyers.

Benchmark comparison

LSS is unaware of benchmark data for this measure.

Data source

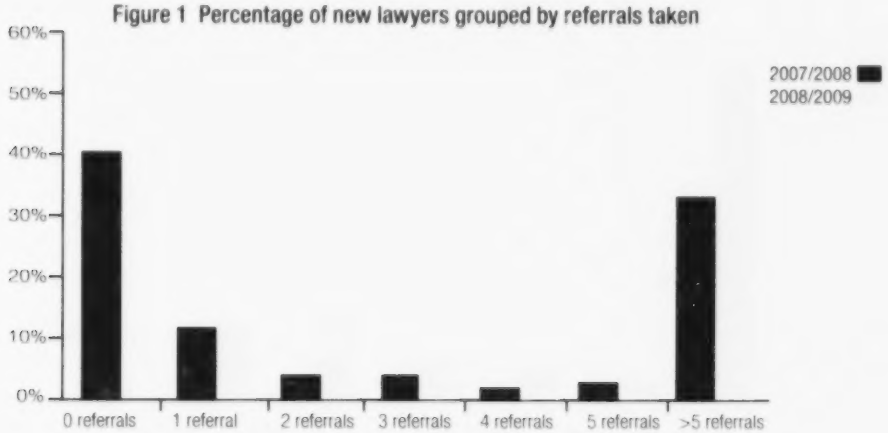
Data comes from the society's case management system database.

Results 2008/2009

LSS would like to increase the number of referrals accepted each year by lawyers new to taking legal aid cases. In 2008/2009, 67 lawyers (or 56% of lawyers new to legal aid) accepted more than five referrals in 2008/2009, surpassing our baseline of 64 lawyers set in 2007/2008 which represented 35% of total new lawyers (see figure 1). However, it is important to note that the total number of lawyers new to legal aid in the previous two fiscal years dropped from 182 in 2007/2008 to 120 in 2008/2009. To ensure clients have access to representation services, LSS is taking steps to support lawyers so that they make a sustained commitment to legal aid, with a special focus on lawyers beginning their legal aid career.

The total number of private lawyers taking referrals this year rose by 5.6% to 953 from 902 in 2007/2008. This is the first increase following five years of declines of approximately 3 to 4% per year.

Figure 1 Percentage of new lawyers grouped by referrals taken



Performance measure: Budget-to-actual expenditure variance.

Past results		Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2006/2007	2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
1.2%	-2.7%	1.5%	-0.17%	1.5%	1.5%

This measure shows how well we are managing our expenditures.

Importance of this measure
Maintaining a low budget-to-actual expenditure variance will demonstrate that we are managing expenditures effectively so that we can make timely use of available funds for client services.

Benchmark comparison
LSS has no comparable data from other legal aid plans.

Data source
Data is gathered from the LSS financial system and is reviewed by external auditors.

Budget-to-actual expenditure variance calculation, 2008/2009

Actual total expenditures per Statement of Operations (see page 33)		$ 82,039,267
minus	Exceptional cases	4,389,044
	Immigration	1,893,180
	Major cases	2,621,000
	Law Foundation-funded projects	1,099,097
		$ 72,036,946
Approved expenditure budget		76,615,000
minus	Exceptional cases	3,000,000
	Immigration	1,700,000
		$ 71,915,000
Variance = 1 – (actual/budget)		-0.17%

Results 2008/2009

The society's budget-to-actual variance of -0.17% for 2008/2009 meets the target of 1.5% variance for the year. This is a positive indicator of our ability to control costs, particularly during a period of declining revenue and growing demand for services.

Performance measure: Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services.

Past results		Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2006/2007	2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
93%	93%	>90%	94%	>90%	>90%

This measure shows the proportion of BC residents who say they support providing legal information, advice, and representation services to people with low incomes.

Importance of this measure
The level of public support for legal aid is a primary indicator of the value BC residents place on legal aid services and the contribution of these services to a fair and efficient justice system. This measure is linked to public awareness of legal aid services, and helps demonstrate the importance of legal aid in ensuring access to justice for the people of BC.

Benchmark comparison
The most recent comparable data comes from public opinion polls conducted in 2006 by Legal Aid Ontario and Legal Aid Alberta based largely on the questions developed by LSS for its poll. At 94% in 2009, the level of public support in BC is higher than the Ontario level of 85% and is approaching the Alberta result of 96%.

Data source
The data is gathered from an annual telephone survey conducted by Ipsos Reid as part of their monthly provincial omnibus survey. In March 2009, interviewers asked 753 people from across BC a series of 20 questions about legal aid. The margin of error is +/- 3.6%, 19 times out of 20. Methodology used in 2009 is identical to that used in previous years. Results from the 2009, 2008, 2006, and 2005 polls are available at www.lss.bc.ca (look under "About us—Our reports").

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Results 2008/2009

- Support for legal aid services remains strong despite the economic downturn. Of BC residents, 79% say they agree that governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority they give to funding for other health and social services (78% in 2007/2008), and 54% of BC residents say legal aid is not adequately funded at this time (53% in 2007/2008).
- 94% of BC residents say they support LSS services (93% in 2007/2008), meeting our target for greater than 90% public support. Over 60% say they "strongly support" our services.
- Nearly all BC residents (89% to 96%, depending on area of law) believe providing legal aid to people with low incomes is very important or somewhat important to fairness in the justice system. Of respondents, 86% said they were aware of legal aid services in BC, though awareness varies by area of law—92% were aware of legal aid services for criminal cases, but only 44% were aware of services for civil law matters.

Performance highlights

In summer and fall 2008/2009, the society's focus shifted from legal aid renewal to managing rising costs in a period of economic decline. In January 2009, LSS began preparing to implement significant board-directed staff and service reductions in the next fiscal year. Although transitioning to the new structure became the priority, LSS continued to pursue key strategies to improve the organization's ability to effectively manage resources and sustain services.

Enhance staff recruitment, retention, and succession programs

- LSS produced a recruitment, retention, and succession planning document this year for implementation in 2009/2010. The report recognizes that effective strategies will depend on the market situation.
- All staff completed personal effectiveness training in 2008/2009 as phase 1 of the society's leadership program, which is designed to build leadership capability across the organization.
- Overall LSS absentee rates rose slightly in 2008/2009, following several years of declines that began after LSS introduced an attendance management program in 2004. The average overall LSS absentee rate in 2008/2009 was 7.15 days, compared with 6.88 days in 2007/2008.[1]

Implement initiatives to manage capacity, resources, risk

- To better track legal aid renewal and other initiatives, this year LSS improved project management processes and templates, and centralized all project information and resources on a new internal website.
- Identifying and mitigating risk, part of sound management, takes on even greater importance in an economic downturn. In 2008/2009, LSS incorporated an enhanced risk management process into our project and strategic planning.

Implement a lawyer recruitment strategy

- The society's Lawyer Supply Project identified recruitment strategies and lawyer supply "indicators" that will enable LSS to closely monitor the availability of lawyers to take legal aid referrals in all regions of BC. Project activities also included hiring articling students and developing a welcome strategy to help LSS build lasting relationships with lawyers new to legal aid. The project also successfully piloted an articling student preparation tariff item to encourage student involvement in legal aid files. LSS will evaluate the pilot to determine if the tariff incentive achieved its objectives. However, the rapid uptake of this item among law firms exhausted the budget allocated to it, so it will be discontinued in 2009/2010.

Enhance the quality of lawyer services to clients

- The society's ongoing Quality Assistance Program to ensure clients receive quality representation services provides lawyers with access to legal research, courses, and other resources to support their legal aid practice. As part of this program, this year LSS also launched an orientation manual for lawyers new to LSS, updated the family

[1] These rates exclude leaves greater than four weeks. By employee group, the average absentee rate in 2008/2009 was 8.27 days for BC Government Employees Union members, 4.61 days for exempt staff, and 4.52 days for Professional Employee Association members.

duty counsel manual, and held local events to recognize selected lawyers for their dedication to legal aid work.

- LSS sets practice standards and conditions that lawyers must meet to take legal aid referrals. In 2008/2009, LSS established formal criteria for removal of lawyers who do not meet these standards and for lawyers who wish to reapply to take legal aid referrals after their permission to do so has expired or been revoked. The society also improved its lawyer profile database to speed referrals of clients to lawyers and to track lawyer supply.

Improve accuracy of financial forecasts and reports

- Greater accuracy in financial forecasting was a priority for LSS this year. The society implemented a new financial system and began development of lead indicators to improve cost forecasting. To better manage the rising costs of large criminal cases, LSS introduced new case identification processes and strict billing rules.
- LSS also introduced a data warehouse and new reporting tools this year to augment the business information available to managers. The software enables better tracking of operational and cost data and facilitates the analysis needed for sound management.

Build public and political support for legal aid

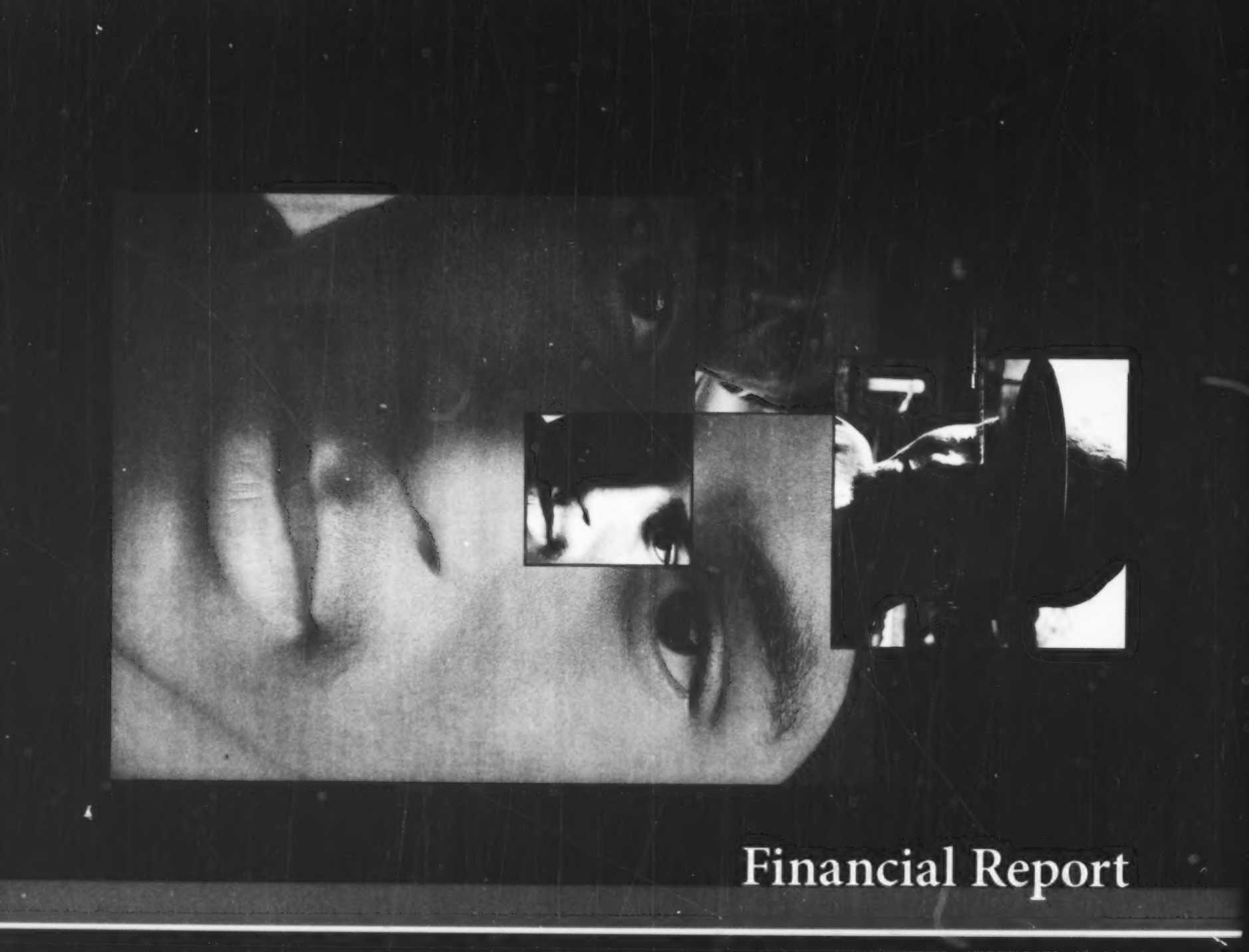
- The society's ongoing communications initiatives maintained relationships with key stakeholders to increase understanding of and support for legal aid, and the broad social benefits of taking an integrated approach to providing services. To support media coverage of justice issues, LSS, the Canadian Bar Association, the Ministry of Attorney General, and the courts together hosted a media workshop in November 2008 that was attended by about 50 BC journalists.
- In fall 2008, LSS commissioned a survey to better understand the range of legal issues facing people with low incomes in BC and how they respond to those issues.[2] Results indicate that a majority (83%) of British Columbians experienced at least one legal problem in the past three years, and, that most of the time, they chose to handle the problem on their own without seeking help. LSS distributed the results to key decision makers and stakeholders to raise awareness of the need for legal aid services in BC.
- LSS continued to advocate for justice reform through provincial and national forums. LSS partnered with the Law Society of BC and others in organizing Clearing the Path to Justice, a public forum on access to justice in January 2009 that featured the Chief Justice of Canada, Beverly McLachlin, as the keynote speaker. LSS also represented the country's legal aid plans on a new Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters convened by Chief Justice McLachlin. The initial focus of this initiative will be the cost of litigation.

Future outlook

Effectively managing service costs to meet demand will be the top priority for LSS in 2009/2010. The society will review key business processes to ensure we are making the best use of available resources to serve clients. We will also introduce more rigorous reporting and monitoring processes and augment risk management at the operational level.

Managers and staff will attend change management workshops in early 2009/2010 to help them through the restructuring process. Core staff development programs will continue, including leadership development and workshops, to improve employee engagement at LSS.

[2] Ipsos Reid surveyed 1,189 BC residents 18 years and older with annual household incomes under $50,000 using online survey methodology from September 23 to October 6, 2008. Margin of error for the total sample is +/- 2.8%, 19 times out of 20. The survey report is available on the LSS website at www.lss.bc.ca.



Financial Report

Financial Report

In our service plan for 2008/2009, LSS projected a $3 million deficit—the second of four years of planned deficit spending. However, rising tariff expenditures, unbudgeted transition costs incurred this year for managing expenditures in future periods, and reduced Notary Foundation and interest revenues due to the global economic downturn led to a deficit of $4.2 million. Although the operating deficit was within the approved deficit amount, it required LSS to deplete our internally restricted funds to under $6 million at year-end.

The following discussion of the society's financial condition for the year ending March 31, 2009, should be read in conjunction with the society's audited financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for not-for-profit organizations. LSS is accountable for how it uses all its funding under the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act.

Management discussion and analysis

Reserve

At March 31, 2009, the society's total reserve was $9.9 million. The total reserve includes $3.9 million invested in capital assets, $0.1 million internally restricted for alternative dispute resolution pilot projects in the area of child protection, and $5.9 million restricted by the board, leaving $50,909 unrestricted.

Resource allocations

LSS allocated $51.1 million or 64.2% of its budget to contracted representation services this year. Salaries and benefits comprised the next largest budget item at $16 million or 20.8% of budget. Expenses for building leases and amortization were budgeted at $3.3 million or 4.1%. The budget for all other costs totalled $8.7 million or 10.9% (see budget in table 5, page 26). At March 31, 2009, there were 100 full-time equivalent positions allocated to direct client support and 78.4 to general administrative support.

Revenue

The society's revenues were $77.9 million this year (see table 4, page 25). Although revenues increased by $1.6 million over 2007/2008, $3.6 million of additional funding was directly tied to additional expenses for specific items such as major cases and Law Foundation projects. As a result, LSS had $2 million less revenue for ongoing day-to-day operations.

Provincial funding

The provincial government provides the largest portion of the society's revenue. This funding is subject to a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between LSS and the Attorney General.

The MOU outlines the anticipated funding for each year and the priorities for its use. It also defines exceptional matters and establishes a stable process for funding them. Provincial revenue for these cases is deferred for use in future years to the extent that it is not required for actual costs incurred during the year (see Tariff expenses, page 25). The MOU allocates specific amounts for representation in each area of law, public legal education and information services, and strategic initiatives, and sets out priorities for reallocating surpluses to shortfalls among budget categories during the year. The society's obligation to provide services is limited to the funding allocated in the MOU for each specific area.

In addition to MOU funding, the provincial government provided specific funding for a number of major cases during the fiscal year. The total funding for these cases was $2.6 million.

Federal funding

The federal government contributes up to $900,000 each year for immigration tariff expenditures in excess of $800,000, and up to $650,000 for large federally prosecuted cases based on actual expenses. These funds are transferred from the federal government to the province and then to LSS, and are included as revenue as part of core provincial government funding. For this fiscal year,

Table 4 Legal Services Society revenue, 2008/2009

Revenue	Actual	%	Budget	%
Core provincial government funding[1]	$ 69,415,029	89.2	$ 66,554,000	86.9
Law Foundation grant	3,599,750	4.6	3,840,000	5.0
Notary Foundation grant	1,654,214	2.1	3,000,000	3.9
Investments	1,019,053	1.3	1,350,000	1.8
Other[2]	880,829	1.1	1,726,000	2.2
Law Foundation project grants	1,291,811	1.7	156,000	0.2
Total	**$ 77,860,686**	**100.0**	**$ 76,626,000**	**100.0**

[1] The variance between actual and budget amounts for core provincial funding is due primarily to an additional $209,000 greater than expected revenue for immigration and $2,621,000 additional funding for major cases.
[2] "Other" includes publishing revenue, administrative fees, etc.

LSS recorded revenue in the amounts of $900,000 for direct immigration tariff expenditures and $209,000 for overhead costs related to the provision of immigration services.

Foundation grants

Both the Law Foundation and the Notary Foundation provide annual grants to LSS with revenue earned on trust funds held by their members. Since these funds are not included in the MOU, we can allocate them at our discretion based on LSS board priorities and service plan goals.

The Notaries Act requires the Notary Foundation to contribute 55% of their interest revenue to the society. The foundation provided $1.7 million to LSS in 2008/2009, down from $3.8 million in 2007/2008 and $1.3 million less than budgeted.

The Law Foundation provided the society with $3.6 million in base funding, $1.2 million in project funding, and $0.2 million in capital funding. Project funds are initially recorded as deferred contributions and then as revenue when actual project costs are incurred. Of the project funds, $1.1 million was included as revenue, and $0.1 million was transferred to deferred contributions. The capital funds were used to purchase specific assets and will be recorded as revenue to match the amortization expense; see note 8(b) of the financial statements, page 38.

Investments

The majority of the society's available cash is invested under the LSS board's investment policy, which permits the society to invest in low-risk securities or pooled funds. Effective April 1, 2007, LSS implemented the new reporting requirements for financial instruments. This required LSS to categorize the investments for revenue recognition and reporting costs; see note 3(b) of the financial statements, page 35. The total revenue for the year was $1 million, $300,000 less than budgeted.

Other revenue

Other sources of revenue for 2008/2009 include payment for administrative services that LSS provides to the Ministry of Attorney General for out-of-mandate cases, funding from the Department of Justice Canada for federal out-of-mandate cases, and a deferred contribution from the Ministry of Children and Family Development for child protection mediation projects.

Expenses

The society's expenses increased to $82 million this year, compared to $77.9 million in 2007/2008. Of this, $2.8 million was for building and amortization, $55.4 million for contracted representation, and $16 million for salaries and benefits. Table 5 shows LSS expenses for 2008/2009. Tables 7 to 12 summarize the society's expenses for the past five years.

Tariff expenses

Tariff expenditures increased by $4.7 million to $55 million in 2008/2009. The largest growth in expenditures was in the family tariff, where a 4.9% rise in referrals over 2007/2008 and increased case costs resulted in a $1.9 million increase in costs. Increased duty counsel coverage and the addition of tiered rates also yielded a $1 million increase in duty counsel costs this year. Although criminal tariff costs rose by $1 million, this was more than offset by funding from the provincial government for major cases in the amount of $2.6 million; therefore, net criminal tariff expenditures dropped by $1.6 million this year compared to 2007/2008 and compared to budget.

The total cost of exceptional matters for the year was $4.8 million, or $2.1 million greater than budgeted. Costs in excess of budget are first applied to any surplus in the criminal tariff, and then the balance is applied against the deferred contribution. As a result, the $1.8 million surplus in the criminal tariff was used to cover all but $339,000 of the deficit in exceptional matters. The deferred contribution was used to cover the remaining $339,000, leaving a deferred contribution balance of only $0.65 million for future years.

To determine the costs for tariff and duty counsel, the society estimates the liability for services provided by the private bar. To arrive at this figure, LSS uses an actuary's model that includes actual costs based on invoices received and estimated costs for work on all unbilled referrals made during the fiscal year. The calculation is 90% accurate, 19 times out of 20. The estimated tariff liability at the end of 2008/2009 is $11.8 million.

Salaries and benefits

Salaries and benefit costs are subject to negotiated collective agreements and terms and conditions of employment. These agreements are approved and funded by the provincial government. During 2008/2009, LSS received $124,000 for the increased cost of these agreements.

Risks

Increasing case costs and demand volumes—particularly in family and immigration law—combined with declining revenues to create significant fiscal challenges for LSS this year, and we expect these budget pressures to continue into 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. LSS is implementing measures to better track and forecast both volumes and costs.

Our ability to manage demand will be critical to meeting budget targets, as we face increasing uncertainty in revenue from non-government sources that are subject to fluctuations in the general economy. Revenues directly attributed to interest rates and general economic conditions decreased by $2.5 million during the year and are budgeted to decrease a further $1.3 million in 2009/2010.

High exceptional case costs in 2008/2009 reduced the society's deferred contribution. It is difficult to accurately forecast the number and type of exceptional cases—and the resulting costs—that LSS will face in any year. A smaller deferred contribution places the society at increased risk of being unable to fund large cases.

Unexpected service costs resulting from legislative and policy changes and government-initiated projects posed an increasing financial risk for LSS. Short provincial government budget timelines also negatively affected budget accuracy.

Long-term funding for immigration/refugee legal aid also continued to be a concern for the society, as immigration volume pressures increase. Although $1.7 million in provincial and federal funding was available in 2008/2009, no funding commitments have been made in this area beyond March 31, 2010.

Future outlook

The provincial government approved the society's 2009/2010 operating budget in February 2009. This budget included $2.4 million for legal aid renewal initiatives and a $2.1 million operating deficit, for a total deficit of $4.5 million. Our financial outlook is shown in table 6.

By the end of 2010/2011, LSS will have spent its reserve funds on innovative projects to meet client needs. To sustain these services or develop new projects to address emerging needs, LSS will have to seek additional revenues. If the society cannot secure funding, we will be required to re-evaluate our service and program priorities.

Table 5 Legal Services Society expenses, 2008/2009

Expenses	Actual	%	Budget	%
Contracted representation	$ 55,409,067	67.5	$ 51,061,700	64.2
Salaries and benefits	16,010,113	19.5	16,534,785	20.8
Building and amortization	2,757,719	3.4	3,255,304	4.1
All other costs	7,862,368	9.6	8,674,211	10.9
Total	$ 82,039,267	100.0	$ 79,526,000	100.0

Table 6 Financial outlook

	2008/2009 Actual	2009/2010 Projected
Revenue (all sources)	$ 77,860,686	$ 75,109,000
Expenses		
Contracted representation services and support (tariff support, etc.)	55,409,067	54,263,000
Strategic initiatives and other expenses	26,630,200	25,376,000
Total expenses	$ 82,039,267	$ 79,639,000
Deficit	(4,178,581)	(4,530,000)

Revenue and expenses, 2004/2005—2008/2009

Table 7 History of revenue and expenses[1]

	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006	2004/2005
Revenue	$ 77,860,686	$ 76,237,707	$ 74,362,120	$ 71,284,730	$ 64,676,570
Expenses	82,039,267	77,871,314	71,982,852	66,575,834	60,484,175
(Deficiency) Excess revenue over expenses	(4,178,581)	(1,633,607)	2,379,268	4,708,896	4,192,395
Market value adjustment[2]	127,982	(11,713)	–	–	–
Net assets	$ 9,916,775	$ 13,967,374	$ 15,612,694	$ 13,233,426	$ 8,524,530

[1] Expenses for the years 2004/2005 to 2007/2008 and the resulting excess (deficiency) and net assets have been restated to reflect a change in amortization this year. See note 4 to the financial statements, page 36.

[2] See Statement of Changes in Net Assets, page 32.

Table 8 History of operating expenses: Legal aid offices

	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006	2004/2005
Regional centres	$ 5,145,475	$ 5,207,073	$ 5,373,664	$ 5,343,847	$ 5,260,904
Local agents	784,708	852,639	704,608	711,300	700,200
Contracted services[1] and advice lawyers	1,439,101	1,384,623	1,344,696	1,297,502	1,149,338
Brydges Line	492,500	483,000	624,583	366,000	338,172
Total	**$ 7,861,784**	**$ 7,927,335**	**$ 8,047,551**	**$ 7,718,649**	**$ 7,448,614**

[1] Contracted services include the Community Legal Assistance Society and West Coast Prison Justice Society.

Table 9 History of operating expenses: Client programs

	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006	2004/2005
Appeals	$ 614,159	$ 608,871	$ 598,362	$ 541,456	$ 488,942
Community Services	1,844,226	1,803,890	1,702,110	1,533,948	1,731,988
Public Legal Education and Information	1,831,817	1,973,192	1,907,504	1,632,970	1,536,267
Total	**$ 4,290,202**	**$ 4,385,953**	**$ 4,207,976**	**$ 3,708,374**	**$ 3,757,197**

Table 10 History of operating expenses: Service delivery support

	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006	2004/2005
Tariff, Audit and Investigation	$ 2,303,736	$ 2,399,613	$ 1,970,028	$ 2,177,157	$ 1,654,241
Field Operations[1]	–	–	–	–	573,860
Total	**$ 2,303,736**	**$ 2,399,613**	**$ 1,970,028**	**$ 2,177,157**	**$ 2,228,101**

[1] Field Operations includes reciprocals. In 2005/2006, Field Operations was eliminated during an internal reorganization, and expenses were distributed throughout the society.

Table 11 History of operating expenses: Management and administration

	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006	2004/2005
Human Resources, Policy, and Planning[1]	$ 2,345,321	$ 2,343,298	$ 2,114,426	$ 1,342,856	$ 699,424
Finance and Corporate Services	7,037,209	7,362,708[2]	4,461,672	4,410,585[3]	4,201,273
Information Technology	2,329,726	2,292,288	1,932,705	1,994,321	1,779,929
Communications	165,707	115,806	80,463	92,729	78,776
Amortization[4]	706,261	727,176	809,608	891,024	819,494
Total	**$ 12,584,224**	**$ 12,841,276**	**$ 9,398,874**	**$ 8,731,515**	**$ 7,578,896**

[1] In 2005/2006, the Policy, Planning, Human Resources, and Training departments were combined during an internal reorganization. Amounts for prior years include Human Resources and Training only.

[2] The 2007/2008 amount for Finance and Corporate Services includes $2.5 million for one time spending as a result of increased funding from the Notary Foundation.

[3] The 2005/2006 amount for Finance and Corporate Services includes $660,000 for the early contract settlement incentive payment.

[4] Amortization for the years 2004/2005 to 2007/2008 has been restated due to a change in amortization this year. See note 4 to the financial statements on page 36.

Table 12 History of operating expenses: Tariff[1]

	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006	2004/2005
Criminal	$ 25,432,052	$ 24,403,277	$ 24,892,578	$ 23,268,162	$ 21,370,625
Family	10,262,192	8,399,588	7,748,648	7,071,015	5,535,663
CFCSA	4,592,664	4,226,431	4,443,968	3,777,742	3,527,608
Immigration	1,893,180	1,491,151	1,223,767	1,047,402	760,437
Exceptional matters	4,349,044	4,306,686	2,510,899	2,031,346	1,681,900
Duty counsel[2]	7,795,103	6,798,153	6,683,606	6,166,008	5,639,730
Human rights[3]	–	(24,847)	8,682	68,441	4,901
Transcripts	588,056	672,839	735,124	740,106	916,285
Pro bono disbursements[4]	(15,434)	(49,892)	(632)	(34,462)	(77,695)
Staff case disbursements	102,464	93,751	111,783	104,379	111,913
Total[5]	**$ 54,999,321**	**$ 50,317,137**	**$ 48,358,423**	**$ 44,240,139**	**$ 39,471,367**

[1] Tariff expenses consist mainly of fees and disbursements payable to private lawyers for services performed in 2008/2009.

[2] In this table, duty counsel consists of payments for criminal duty counsel, circuit courts, and family duty counsel, but not payments for immigration duty counsel, Brydges Line, and advice lawyers. Payments for immigration duty counsel are included in immigration; payments for Brydges Line and advice lawyers are included in table 7 on page 27. The duty counsel amount in the Statement of Operations on page 33 includes payments for all duty counsel types.

[3] Human rights coverage was eliminated as of April 2002, due to funding cuts to the BC Human Rights Commission. Expenses reported are for referrals issued prior to April 1, 2002. The commission (via the provincial government) reimbursed LSS for the cost of the human rights tariff for BC Human Rights Act matters.

[4] Tariff services for poverty law cases were eliminated in April 2002. Private lawyers reimburse LSS for costs they recover from clients assisted under the former poverty law services. These reimbursements are paid back into pro bono disbursements.

[5] The 2008/2009 total consists of expenses on duty counsel, tariffs, and transcripts (shown in the Statement of Operations on page 33) minus expenses on Brydges Line and advice lawyers.

Legal Services Society Financial Statements 2008/2009

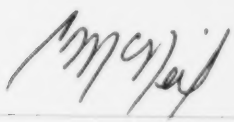
Legal Services Society Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the society's financial statements. This responsibility includes maintaining the integrity and objectivity of the society's financial records, and presenting the society's financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Management maintains a system of internal controls that ensures that all material agreements and transactions of the society are properly recorded. The society's financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2009, have been examined by KPMG LLP. Their examination was made in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting standards, and included obtaining a sufficient understanding of the society's internal controls to plan the audit.

The directors of the society's board are not employees of the society. The board of directors is responsible for determining that management fulfills its responsibilities in the preparation of the financial statements and the control of the society's financial operations. The board of directors meets with staff of KPMG LLP to discuss their audit work, the society's internal controls, and the financial statements. The board of directors is responsible for approving the financial statements.

Mark Benton, QC
Executive Director



Catherine McNeil, CA
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AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors,
Legal Services Society, and,

To the Attorney General,
Province of British Columbia

We have audited the balance sheet of the Legal Services Society (the "Society") as at March 31, 2009 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Society's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at March 31, 2009 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

KPMG LLP

Chartered Accountants

Burnaby, Canada
May 8, 2009

KPMG LLP, a Canadian limited liability partnership is the Canadian member firm of KPMG International, a Swiss cooperative.

Legal Services Society Balance Sheet

For the year ended March 31, 2009

	2009	2008 (restated note 4)
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	$ 1,403,842	$ 908,092
Short-term investments *(note 5)*	6,308,022	14,065,659
Accounts receivable		
Government of British Columbia	1,414,156	3,369,005
Government of Canada	2,780,691	826,722
Other	1,205,637	2,958,090
Prepaid expenses	642,925	692,868
Total current assets	13,755,273	22,820,436
Long-term investments *(note 5)*	11,207,140	8,045,665
Capital assets *(note 6)*	4,803,007	3,257,307
Total assets	$ 29,765,420	$ 34,123,408
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		
General	$ 2,706,950	$ 3,626,340
Tariff *(note 7)*	14,959,702	13,977,564
Deferred contributions *(note 8a)*	1,017,123	1,469,700
Total current liabilities	18,683,775	19,073,604
Deferred capital contribution *(note 8b)*	588,218	509,070
Long-term liabilities *(note 10)*	576,652	573,360
Surplus in net assets *(note 11)*		
Invested in capital assets *(note 12)*	3,920,789	2,454,237
Internally restricted *(note 13)*	5,945,077	11,216,788
Unrestricted	50,909	296,349
	9,916,775	13,967,374
Total liabilities and surplus	$ 29,765,420	$ 34,123,408

Commitments *(note 14)*

Contingencies *(note 17)*

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Approved by:

D. Mayland McKimm, QC
Chair of the Board of Directors

Janice Comeau
Chair of the Finance Committee

Legal Services Society Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended March 31, 2009

	Invested in capital assets (note 12)	Unrestricted	Internally restricted (note 13)	Total 2009	Total 2008 (restated note 4)
Balance, beginning of year	$ 1,576,623	$ 316,437	$ 11,216,788	$ 13,109,848	$ 15,005,844
Restatement due to change in leasehold amortization *(note 4)*	877,614	(20,088)	–	857,526	606,850
Balance, beginning of year, restated	2,454,237	296,349	11,216,788	13,967,374	15,612,694
Deficiency of revenue over expenses for the year	(706,261)	(2,094,760)	(1,377,560)	(4,178,581)	(1,633,607)
Investment in capital assets	2,172,813	(1,703,662)	(469,151)	–	–
Change in market value of investment classified as "available-for-sale"	–	127,982	–	127,982	(11,713)
Internal transfer	–	3,425,000	(3,425,000)	–	–
Balance, end of year	$ 3,920,789	$ 50,909	$ 5,945,077	$ 9,916,775	$ 13,967,374

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Legal Services Society Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31, 2009

	2009	2008 (restated note 4)
Revenue		
Grants		
Government of British Columbia	$ 69,415,029	$ 67,019,770
Law Foundation	4,891,561	3,558,397
Notary Foundation	1,654,214	3,768,367
	75,960,804	74,346,534
Other income		
Interest	1,019,053	1,423,537
Miscellaneous	880,829	467,636
	1,899,882	1,891,173
Total income	$ 77,860,686	$ 76,237,707
Expenses		
Amortization	706,261	727,176
Local agents	784,708	852,639
Board expenses	161,077	187,736
Computers	1,364,267	1,423,099
Duty counsel	8,420,675	7,365,226
Grants and contracted services	3,897,299	6,096,295
Libraries	147,486	128,956
Miscellaneous	419,314	396,115
Office	904,578	930,879
Premises	2,051,458	1,773,218
Salaries and benefits	16,010,113	14,340,516
Tariffs	46,395,667	42,756,772
Transcripts	592,725	678,139
Travel	183,639	214,548
Total expenses	$ 82,039,267	$ 77,871,314
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	$ (4,178,581)	$ (1,633,607)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Legal Services Society Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31, 2009

	2009	2008 (restated note 4)
Cash flows provided by (used in):		
Operating activities		
Deficiency of revenue over expenses for the year	$ (4,178,581)	$ (1,633,607)
Items not involving the outlay of cash		
Amortization	706,261	727,176
Accretion expense	15,000	19,000
	$ (3,457,320)	$ (887,431)
Changes in non-cash operating items		
Accounts receivable	1,753,333	(308,620)
Prepaid expenses	49,943	(92,251)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	62,748	2,028,441
Deferred contributions	(452,577)	(1,037,753)
	$ (2,043,873)	$ (297,614)
Financing activities		
Deferred capital contributions	79,148	509,070
Long-term liabilities	3,292	(24,707)
	82,440	484,363
Investment activities		
Capital asset additions	(2,266,961)	(990,243)
Short-term investments	7,757,637	4,386,075
Long-term investments	(3,033,493)	(4,021,779)
	$ 2,457,183	$ (625,947)
Net increase (decrease) in cash position	495,750	(439,198)
Cash, beginning of year	908,092	1,347,290
Cash, end of year	$ 1,403,842	$ 908,092

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Legal Services Society Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2009

1. Overview

The Legal Services Society (the society) was established under the Legal Services Society Act on October 1, 1979, and was revised on May 31, 2007. The society is governed by a board of directors, of which five are appointed by the province of British Columbia (the province) and four are appointed by the Law Society. The purpose of the society is to:

- assist individuals to resolve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice,
- establish and administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid to individuals in British Columbia, and
- provide advice to the Attorney General respecting legal aid and access to justice for individuals in British Columbia.

The society is not subject to income taxes.

2. Change in Accounting Policy

(a) Effective April 1, 2008, the society adopted the CICA Handbook Section 1535, *Capital Disclosures.* Under this new standard, the society is required to disclose both qualitative and quantitative information that enables users of the financial statements to evaluate the society's objectives, policies, and processes for managing capital. It also includes disclosure regarding what the society regards as capital, whether the society has complied with any external requirements, and, in the event of non-compliance, the consequences of not complying with these capital requirements (note 11).

(b) Effective April 1, 2008, the society adopted CICA Handbook Section 1400, *General Standards of Financial Statement Presentation.* This section changes the guidance related to management's responsibility to assess the ability of the society to continue as a going concern. Management is required to make an assessment of the society's ability to continue as a going concern and should take into account all available information about the future, which is at least, but not limited to, 12 months from the balance sheet date. Disclosure is required of material uncertainties related to events that may cast significant doubt upon the society's ability to continue as a going concern.

3. Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Basis of accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for not-for-profit organizations.

(b) Financial instruments

The society's cash, short-term investments, and long-term investments have been classified as available-for-sale and are carried at market value with the changes in market value recorded in unrestricted surplus in net assets.

Accounts receivable have been classified as loans and receivables and are measured at amortized cost. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities have been classified as other financial liabilities and are measured at amortized cost.

(c) Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost and are amortized on a straight-line basis as follows:

	Per year
Furniture	10–20%
Equipment	20%
Computer equipment	25–33%
Computer software	20–33%
Case Management System	10%
Leasehold improvements	lower of lease term and useful life

(d) Deferred lease inducements

Tenant inducements received for leased premises are deferred and amortized on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

(e) Asset retirement obligation

The society recognizes the fair value of a future asset retirement obligation as a liability in the period in which it incurs a legal obligation associated with the retirement of tangible long-lived assets that results from the acquisition, construction, development, and/or normal use of the assets. The society concurrently recognizes a corresponding increase in the carrying amount of the related long-lived asset that is depreciated over the life of the asset.

The fair value of the asset retirement obligation is estimated using the expected cash flow approach that reflects a range of possible outcomes discounted at a credit-adjusted, risk-free interest rate. Subsequent to the initial measurement, the asset

retirement obligation is adjusted at the end of each period to reflect the passage of time and changes in the estimated future cash flows underlying the obligation. Changes in the obligation due to the passage of time are recognized in the Statement of Operations as an operating expense using the interest method. Changes in the obligation due to changes in estimated cash flows are recognized as an adjustment of the carrying amount of the related long-lived asset that is depreciated over the remaining life of the asset.

(f) Pension plan

The society participates in a multi-employer contributory pension plan. The cost of the defined contributions is recognized based on the contributions required to be made during each period.

(g) Revenue recognition

The society follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable, if the amount can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Restricted contributions for expenses that will be incurred in future periods are deferred and recognized in the period in which the related expenses are incurred.

(h) Donated services

Donated services are recorded at fair value when they would normally be purchased by the society and when fair value can be estimated for the services. If fair value cannot be reasonably estimated, the services are not recorded.

(i) Tariff expenses

Tariff expenses include amounts billed by the lawyers to the society and an estimate of amounts of services performed by lawyers but not yet billed to the society.

(j) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Areas where estimates are significant to the financial statements include the collectibility of accounts receivable, amortization of capital assets, asset retirement obligations, tariff expenses, and contingent liabilities. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

4. Change in Amortization

During the year ended March 31, 2009, the society changed the amortization period for the Vancouver office leasehold improvements, asset retirement obligation, and lease inducements to 15 years. The lease term includes an initial term of 10 years with a 5-year renewal period. The March 31, 2008 comparative figures have been restated to reflect an increase in capital assets and invested in capital assets of $877,614, an increase in long-term liabilities of $20,088, a decrease in unrestricted net assets of $20,088, a decrease in amortization expense of $257,372, and an increase in premises expense of $6,696.

5. Investments

During the year, certain investments classified as held-to-maturity were sold prior to their date of maturity. Accordingly, investments previously classified as held-to-maturity have been reclassified as available-for-sale. The combined carrying value of the society's short- and long-term investments is $17,515,162 (2008—$22,111,324). Included in investments is $246,952 for accrued interest (2008—$500,848). The investments have a market value at March 31, 2009, of $17,515,162 (2008—$22,237,514).

	March 31, 2009		March 31, 2008	
	Carrying value	Market value	Carrying value	Market value
Held-to-maturity	$ –	$ –	$ 19,630,494	$ 19,756,684
Available-for-sale	17,515,162	17,515,162	2,480,830	2,480,830
Total	$ 17,515,162	$ 17,515,162	$ 22,111,324	$ 22,237,514

6. Capital Assets

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Net book value 2009	Net book value 2008 (restated note 4)
Furniture	$ 1,007,513	$ (473,832)	$ 533,681	$ 416,110
Equipment	520,849	(232,976)	287,873	376,194
Computer equipment	636,646	(165,856)	470,790	73,844
Computer software	2,382,950	(1,065,058)	1,317,892	151,293
Case Management System	1,126,528	(1,117,131)	9,397	35,771
Leasehold improvements	3,558,584	(1,375,210)	2,183,374	2,204,095
	$ 9,233,070	$ (4,430,063)	$ 4,803,007	$ 3,257,307

7. Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities—Tariff

	2009	2008
Balance, beginning of year	$ 13,977,564	$ 13,480,932
Duty counsel	8,420,675	7,365,226
Tariffs	46,395,667	42,756,772
Less: tariff payments made during year	(53,834,204)	(49,625,366)
Balance, end of the year	$ 14,959,702	$ 13,977,564

The society uses an actuarial model to estimate legal services performed but not yet billed to the society. Management estimated the liability to be approximately $11,826,000 (2008—$11,870,000). This estimate included in the above table incorporates average case costs and service billings for similar cases, based on historical experience over a two-year period. Actual costs could differ from this estimate.

8. Deferred Contributions

(a) Contributions that are restricted to funding specific expenses are deferred and amortized to operations as the related expenses are incurred.

	Balance, beginning of year	Restricted contributions	Criminal tariff surplus	Amortized to operations	Balance, end of year
Law Foundation	$ 60,362	$ 1,176,560	$ –	$ 1,099,097	$ 137,825
Ministry of Children and Family Development	418,480	–	–	191,040	227,440
Government of British Columbia (exceptional matters*)	990,858	2,700,000	1,787,517	4,826,517	651,858
Total	$ 1,469,700	$ 3,876,560	$ 1,787,517	$ 6,116,654	$ 1,017,123

* The society's Memorandum of Understanding with the Attorney General of British Columbia provides for restricted funding for exceptional matters commencing with the 2003 fiscal year. In the case of an annual shortfall, the society must first apply the shortfall to any surplus in the criminal tariff. Any remaining shortfall is then applied to the deferred contribution. Exceptional matters are cases that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A court has ordered that counsel be provided.
- The complexity of the legal matter requires payment of fees in excess of the standard rate.
- Legal fees or disbursements exceed $50,000.
- Several individuals are involved in a similar or related legal proceeding.

(b) Deferred capital contribution represents the unamortized amount of externally restricted grants and other funding received for the purchase of capital assets. Amortization of capital contribution is recorded as revenue in the statement of operations.

	2009	2008
Balance, beginning of year	$ 509,070	$ –
Contributions received	184,862	554,588
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	(105,714)	(45,518)
Balance, end of year	$ 588,218	$ 509,070

9. Pension Plan

The society and its employees contribute to the Municipal Pension Plan (the plan), a jointly trusteed pension plan. The board of trustees, representing plan members and employers, is responsible for overseeing the management of the plan, including investment of the assets and administration of benefits. The plan is a multi-employer contributory pension plan. Basic pension benefits provided are defined. The plan has about 150,000 active members and approximately 54,000 retired members.

Every three years an actuarial valuation is performed to assess the financial position of the plan and the adequacy of plan funding. The most recent valuation as at December 31, 2006, indicated a surplus of $438 million for basic pension benefits. The next valuation will be as at December 31, 2009, with results available for 2010. The actuary does not attribute portions of the surplus to individual employers. The society paid $846,613 for employer contributions to the plan in fiscal 2009 (2008—$775,113).

10. Long-Term Liabilities

	2009	2008
Asset retirement obligations (a)	$ 400,000	$ 369,000
Lease inducements	176,652	204,360
	$ 576,652	$ 573,360

(a) Asset retirement obligation

Included within long-term liabilities is the society's accrual for its asset retirement obligation for the estimated costs of restoring certain leased facilities to their original condition at the end of the lease terms. The following is a reconciliation of the changes in the asset retirement obligation during the year:

	2009	2008
Balance, beginning of year	$ 385,000	$ 374,000
Liabilities incurred during year	–	–
Accretion expense	15,000	19,000
Less: liabilities settled	–	(8,000)
Balance, end of year	400,000	385,000
Less: current portion	–	(16,000)
Long-term portion	$ 400,000	$ 369,000

The accretion expense is included in the premises expense. The undiscounted estimated cash flows required to settle the obligation range from $24,000 to $280,000 during the years 2010 to 2019. The cash flows are discounted using a credit-adjusted, risk-free rate of 5% (2008—5%).

11. Capital

The society receives its principal source of capital through funding received from the Ministry of Attorney General. The society defines capital to be net assets and deferred capital contributions.

The society's objective when managing capital is to fund its operations and capital asset additions. The society manages the capital structure in conjunction with the Ministry of Attorney General and makes adjustments based on available government funding and economic conditions. Currently, the society's strategy is to monitor expenditures to reduce capital in accordance with budgets approved by the Ministry of Attorney General. The society is not subject to debt covenants or any other capital requirements.

12. Invested in Capital Assets

	2009	2008 (restated note 4)
(a) Net assets invested in capital assets are calculated as follows:		
Capital assets	$ 4,803,007	$ 3,257,307
Amounts financed by: Asset retirement obligation, net of accretion expense	(294,000)	(294,000)
Deferred capital contribution	(588,218)	(509,070)
Balance, end of year	$ 3,920,789	$ 2,454,237
(b) Deficiency of revenue over expenses:		
Amortization of capital assets	$ (706,261)	$ (727,176)
(c) Net change in investment in capital assets:		
Net increase in capital assets	$ 2,251,961	$ 963,243
Change in asset retirement obligation	–	(3,000)
Deferred capital contribution	(79,148)	(509,070)
Investment in capital assets	$ 2,172,813	$ 451,173

13. Internally Restricted Net Assets

	Child protection	Board-directed strategic initiatives	Total
Opening balance	$ 216,788	$ 11,000,000	$ 11,216,788
Less: expenditures	(147,530)	(1,230,030)	(1,377,560)
Capital expenditures		(469,151)	(469,151)
Transfer		(3,425,000)	(3,425,000)
	$ 69,258	$ 5,875,819	$ 5,945,077

The board of directors has authorized the following restrictions of the surplus in net assets:

- On March 31, 2003, the restriction of $600,000 for a child protection pilot project.
- On December 15, 2006, the restriction of $11 million for board-directed strategic initiatives.
- The board approved the transfer of $3.425 million from the restricted net assets.
- These internally restricted amounts are not available for other purposes without approval by the board of directors.

14. Commitments

The society has the following commitments for long-term leases of its office premises and operating leases:

2010	$ 947,732
2011	987,826
2012	974,403
2013	955,811
2014	927,605
Thereafter	399,311

At fiscal year-end, the liability for future costs of legal services to be performed beyond the fiscal year, for which the society is currently committed, is estimated by management to be approximately $18 million. This estimate uses the same methodology as described in note 7 for tariff payables.

15. Related Parties

The society is related to the province and its ministries, agencies, and Crown corporations. In this relationship, the province provided funding in the amount of $69,415,029 (2008—$67,019,770) and the society is responsible for providing legal aid to individuals throughout BC. At year-end, the province owed the society $1,414,156 (2008—$3,369,005).

Certain members of the board of directors provide tariff services to the society. These services are provided in the regular course of business under the same terms and conditions as other lawyers. The total amount paid during the year was $227,696 (2008—$325,405). All payments to board members are reviewed by the finance committee on a quarterly basis.

16. Economic Dependence

In 2009, the society received 89% (2008—88%) of its operating revenue from the province, and 6% (2008—5%) from the Law Foundation of British Columbia. The society depends on funding from these sources for the continuance of its operations.

17. Contingencies

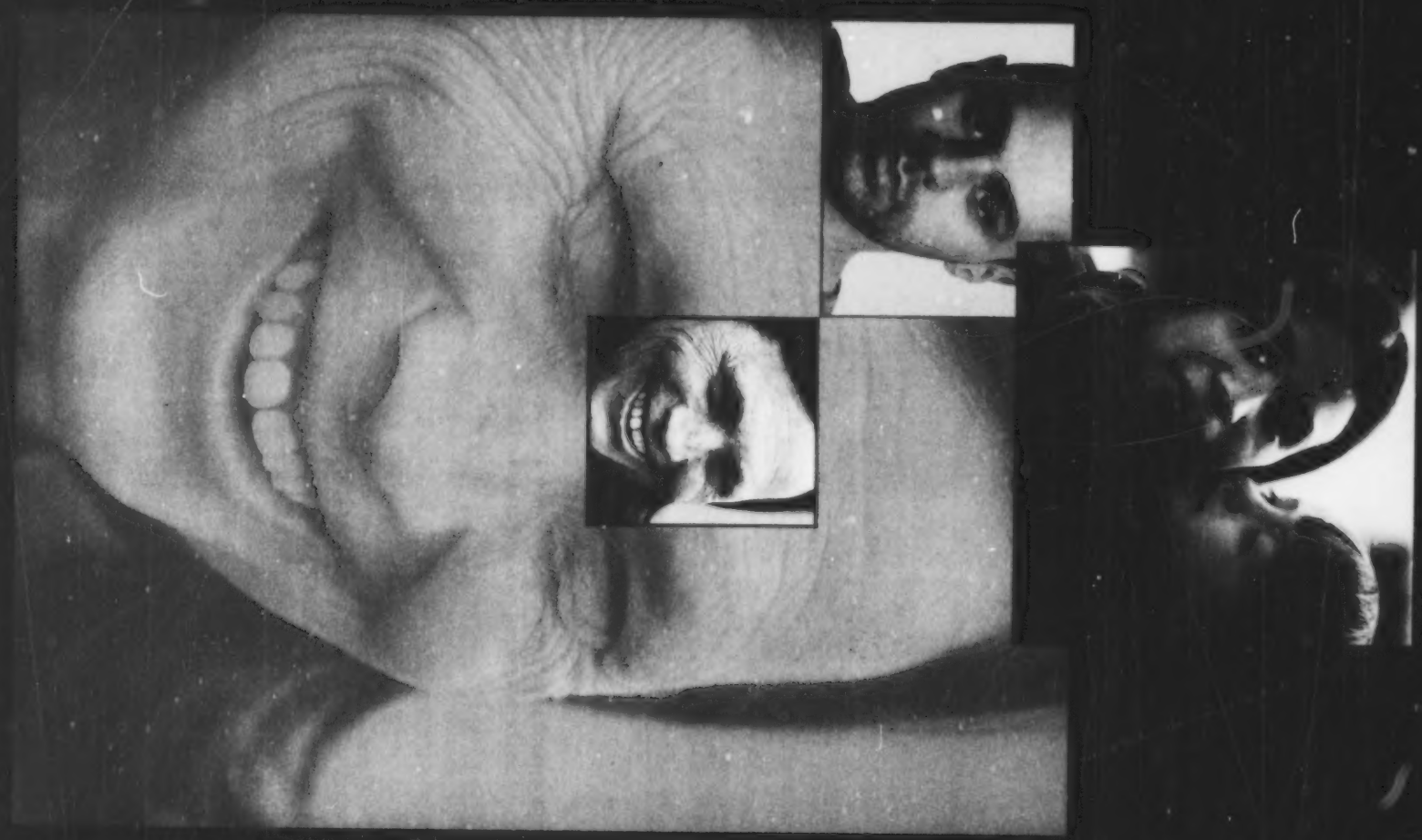
The nature of the society's activities are such that there is usually pending or prospective litigation at any time against the society. With respect to claims at March 31, 2009, management believes the society has valid defenses and appropriate insurance coverage in place. In the event that any of these claims are successful, management believes they will not have a material effect on the society's financial position.

18. Financial Instruments

Accounts receivable and accounts payable and accrued liabilities approximate their fair values due to their immediate or short term to maturity.

19. Comparative Figures

Certain comparative figures have been changed to conform to the current year's presentation.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Operating Data

The tables in this section provide a detailed breakdown of the numbers of clients that used LSS services over the past three years. Data is provided on applications and referrals for legal representation, advice and information services, and policy compliance processes. For more information on LSS services, please visit our website at www.lss.bc.ca.

Legal representation

Table 13 summarizes applications and referrals for legal representation by area of law for the past three years. For information on the reliability of this data, see page 46.

Table 13 Demand for legal representation: All areas of law

	2008/2009		2007/2008[1]		2006/2007[1]	
Criminal	30,039	23,630	29,314	22,867	29,024	22,602
Family[2]	10,345	5,332	9,067	5,081	8,617	4,525
CFCSA[3]	2,775	2,254	2,786	2,274	2,884	2,408
Immigration	2,079	1,464	1,480	1,192	1,199	1,012
Total	**45,238**	**32,680**	**42,647**	**31,414**	**41,722**	**30,547**

[1] Data as recorded in previous annual reports.

[2] In 2008/2009, 770 referrals were approved on exception review (because of extenuating circumstances), compared to 746 in 2007/2008 and 421 in 2006/2007.

[3] Child, Family and Community Service Act.

Volume changes

Applications and referrals rose in all areas of law this year, except CFCSA, which remained stable. Table 14 on page 42 shows changes in application and referral volumes for the last three years, and figure 2 illustrates the breakdown of referrals by area of law for 2008/2009.

The growth in family law applications, up 14% in 2008/2009 (compared with a 5.2% increase in 2007/2008 and a decline of 2.2% in 2006/2007), may be attributed in part to the society's legal aid awareness campaign, which for several years has focused on building understanding of LSS family law services among intermediaries and the public. Demand may also be driven by the economic downturn—job loss or other financial stress can trigger or exacerbate legal problems, especially among people already facing economic, health, or other issues. To manage the unbudgeted increase in demand at a time when the society's revenue is declining, LSS has eliminated or reduced some family services introduced since 2006 to re-allocate those funds to core family law services for clients most at risk (see page 7).

The significant increase in immigration volumes (applications increased by 40%, referrals by 22.8%) is consistent with growth in refugee claims in the Western Region of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

The percentage of total referrals provided by LSS in each area of law for the year is shown in figure 2. While the relative proportions remain basically unchanged year over year, there has been a slight decline (about 2% each) in the proportion of both criminal and CFCSA referrals since 2004, and a corresponding growth (about 2% each) in the proportion of immigration and family referrals.

Table 14 Percent change in application and referral volumes by area of law

	2008/2009		2007/2008		2006/2007	
Criminal	2.4%	3.3%	0.9%	1.2%	2.2%	2.5%
Family	14.0%	4.9%	5.2%	12.3%	-2.2%	-0.9%
CFCSA	-0.3%	-0.9%	-3.3%	-5.6%	-2.6%	-6.0%
Immigration	40.0%	22.8%	23.4%	17.8%	15.9%	20.9%
Total	**6.0%**	**4.0%**	**2.2%**	**2.8%**	**1.3%**	**1.7%**

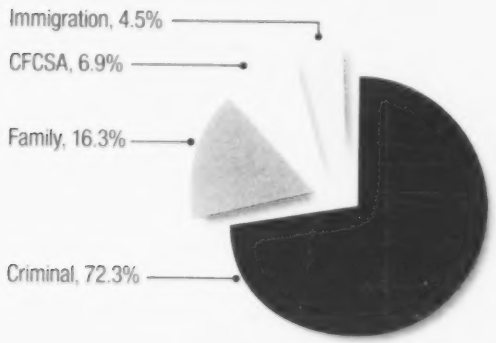
Table 15 Legal advice services

	Number of client visits/calls handled[1]		
Criminal duty counsel[2]	81,581	81,216	82,024
Immigration duty counsel	1,113	832	1,006
Family duty counsel and advice lawyers	25,899	22,371	21,122
Brydges Line	27,045	28,360	30,011
LawLINE advice	6,218	8,001	9,824

[1] Totals reflect the number of times advice was given (or the number of calls handled), not the number of clients served or issues addressed (clients may have one or more issues at a time and may access services more than once).

[2] Includes duty counsel at circuit courts. In 2008/2009, circuit court accounted for 2,486 client visits.

Figure 2 Referrals by area of law, 2008/2009



Legal advice

LSS legal advice services provide essential legal assistance to people with low incomes who are not eligible for legal representation.

Table 15 above provides data for LSS legal advice services for the past three years. The 22% decline in LawLINE advice calls this year and the 16% increase in family duty counsel clients can be primarily attributed to the introduction of telephone triage in July 2008. LSS call centre staff now assess and direct all phone clients to the most appropriate legal aid service to reduce caller wait times and to streamline service. Callers with family law issues are encouraged to seek in-person services (such as duty counsel) in their community, and LSS increased family duty counsel services in high volume locations to handle the anticipated rise in demand. Rising demand for family duty counsel services, as for all family law services, may also be linked to the economic downturn. The increase in immigration duty

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Total	**45,238**	**32,680**	**42,647**	**31,414**	**41,722**	**30,547**

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Table 14 Percent change in application and referral volumes by area of law

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Family	14.0%	4.9%	5.2%	12.3%	-2.2%	-0.9%
CFCSA	-0.3%	-0.9%	-3.3%	-5.6%	-2.6%	-6.0%
Immigration	40.0%	22.8%	23.4%	17.8%	15.9%	20.9%
Total	**6.0%**	**4.0%**	**2.2%**	**2.8%**	**1.3%**	**1.7%**

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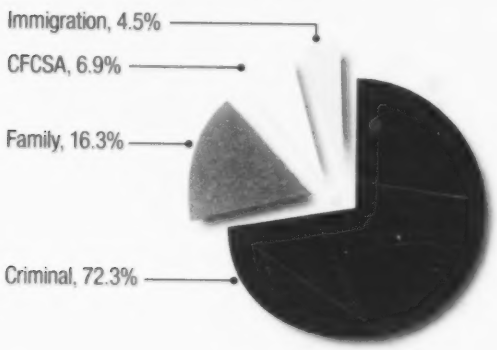

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Table 16 Legal information services

LawLINE information/referral requests[1]	4,591	7,625	6,626
Public legal education and information publications distributed	123,751	130,055	139,816
Legal aid awareness materials distributed[2]	28,867	85,527	n/a
Public legal education and information materials produced (new and revised)[3]	21	23	28
Legal information outreach worker (LIOW) information requests	5,961[4]	5,788	3,491

[1] Data indicates the number of calls handled, not the number of individuals served (people may access the service more than once). Data on LawLINE advice services is reported in table 15.

[2] This includes brochures, posters, advertisements, bookmarks, and other materials produced by LSS to ensure the people of BC are aware of legal aid services and how to access them. LSS began reporting this data in 2007/2008.

[3] Data excludes brochures and other materials about legal aid services (16 publications in 2008/2009) as well as administrative materials such as reports and evaluations.

[4] Data is incomplete for some locations.

Table 17 Use of LSS websites

	Number of visits/month		
LSS website	20,384	16,886	15,770
Family Law in BC	16,174	12,508	9,272
LawLINK	4,472	4,995	5,643

Note: "Visits" are the number of times the site is accessed over a given period (if the same person returns to the site after one hour, that person is counted again as a new visitor). Data reflects the average number of visits per month for each year.

Table 18 Eligibility reviews

	2008/2009			2007/2008			2006/2007	
Granted	22	62	0	15	34	1	30	26
Denied	216	249	0	139	180	14	161	173
Other[4]	12	13	0	8	20	1	15	8
Files open, under review	0	6	0	1	3	0	4	4
Total[5]	**250**	**330**	**0**	**163**	**237**	**16**	**210**	**211**

[1] Coverage reviews determine whether an applicant was appropriately denied a referral based on the current coverage guidelines.

[2] Financial reviews determine whether an applicant was appropriately denied a referral based on the current financial guidelines.

[3] To improve reporting accuracy, files reviewed in 2008/2009 and 2007/2008 for both coverage and financial eligibility were recorded in a combined category for the first time. In previous years, files that were reviewed for both were recorded under either coverage or financial reviews.

[4] "Other" means the matter was abandoned by the applicant, returned to the referring office to consider additional information or issues, or resolved by other means.

[5] Total includes files still open at the end of the previous fiscal year.

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Table 18 Eligibility reviews

	2008/2009			2007/2008			2006/2007	
Reviews	Coverage[1]	Financial[2]	Coverage/ Financial[3]	Coverage[1]	Financial[2]	Coverage/ Financial[3]	Coverage[1]	Financial[2]
Granted	22	62	0	15	34	1	30	26
Denied	216	249	0	139	180	14	161	173
Other[4]	12	13	0	8	20	1	15	8
Files open, under review	0	6	0	1	3	0	4	4
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counsel is commensurate with general increases in demand for immigration services. For information on the reliability of this data, see page 47.

Legal information

LSS offers a range of legal information services that can help people with low incomes solve their legal problems on their own or with help from intermediaries (see Glossary, page 52).

> *"I was served two days ago with a stack of paperwork, none of which I understood (except the part where my child's dad was trying to take her away from me). Not only did I find info explaining things, I also found out that I qualify for legal aid! I think I actually might get some sleep tonight! Thank you for providing an amazing service."*
>
> *—Family Law website client*

Table 16 on page 44 provides data on legal information services provided by LSS to clients for the past three years. Significantly lower LawLINE information call volumes (down 40%) this year reflect the diversion of phone clients seeking information to in-person services through telephone triage, which began in July 2008 (see "Legal advice"). The decrease in distribution of print PLEI materials is related to the society's increasing production of Internet and multimedia materials (see table 17 for website use data) and the online distribution of print-based materials. LSS is also assessing our promotion and distribution strategy for print materials. For information on the reliability of this data, see page 47.

LSS manages three of its own websites:

- LSS website, which features publications on various aspects of the law, as well as information about LSS and legal aid services (www.lss.bc.ca)
- Family Law in BC, which helps people understand and use the law to resolve their family law problems (www.familylaw.lss.bc.ca)
- LawLINK, which is designed to help people and their advocates find current and usable self-help legal information online (www.lawlink.bc.ca)

In 2008, LSS also developed the website for the Nanaimo Justice Access Centre.

Table 17 on page 44 demonstrates that usage of the LSS website and the Family Law website continues to grow. Average monthly visits to the LSS site increased by 21% this year over 2007/2008, while visits to the Family Law website rose by 29%. Sustained growth in visits to these sites may indicate both growing computer literacy and an unmet need for legal help in the general public. Regular additions of new multimedia material encourage repeat visits to the Family Law site, and improvements to the LSS website in 2007 may have led to this year's growth. The decline in visits to LawLINK may reflect the limited updating of the site in preparation for the launching of Clicklaw (a site sponsored by LSS and other members of the PLEI network, led by BC Courthouse Libraries) that will replace LawLINK in 2009. For information on the reliability of this data, see page 47.

Policy compliance

Staff at regional centres, local agent offices, and the LSS Call Centre do not provide legal representation if they believe an applicant:

- is not financially eligible,
- has a problem that falls outside the society's coverage rules, or
- has provided insufficient information to satisfy them that he or she is eligible for a referral.

Staff ensure LSS coverage and financial eligibility policies are applied accurately and consistently across the province by:

- reviewing refusals for legal representation whenever applicants ask (requests must be submitted within 90 days of the applicant's application being denied), and
- investigating all complaints received by anyone who alleges someone is improperly receiving legal representation.

Table 19 Complaints about clients' eligibility

Result of investigation	2008/2009	2007/2008	2006/2007
Complaint unfounded/coverage continued	70	57	76
Coverage terminated/case converted to private fee retainer or collection file opened	46	31	45
Referral cancelled after client failed to respond to a request for reassessment	11	1	0
Complaint about a non-LSS client	19	30	22
Complaint received after case concluded or substantially completed	7	11	11
No further investigation required (e.g., complaint duplicates information already reported and investigated)	9	18	19
Complaint received but investigation not completed	44[1]	16	52
Total[2]	206	164	225

[1] Includes 19 complaint files received but not yet open at year-end.
[2] Total number of complaints includes files still open at the end of the previous fiscal year.

Table 18 on page 44 shows the volumes and results of eligibility reviews for the past three years. Table 19 shows the volume and results of investigations of complaints by third parties about clients receiving legal aid. Coverage reviews rose by 53% and financial eligibility reviews by 40% over 2007/2008, while complaints about clients' eligibility increased 25% over 2007/2008 (though remaining 8% lower than in 2006/2007). LSS is currently assessing its review criteria and processes to determine how to manage the growing volume. The cause of the dramatic increases (following declines in 2007/2008) is not certain. The growth exceeds what would be expected even given the increases in the overall volume of applications. One explanation could be a sense of desperation created by the economic downturn compelling more applicants who have been denied coverage to pursue a review and more third parties to report alleged abuse of the legal aid system.

LSS conducted eligibility reviews for 1.2% of total applications and received client eligibility complaints (table 19 above) for less than 1% of total referrals in 2008/2009. For information on the reliability of the data in tables 18 and 19, see page 47.

Reliability of data

The following describes the sources and accuracy of LSS operating data.

Legal representation (tables 13 and 14)

When annual report numbers are generated for any fiscal year, a few paper applications may not have been processed yet or were initiated in error and not yet corrected. As a result, the final numbers for a given year may differ slightly from those in the annual report. The 2008/2009 application data in table 13 is expected to be accurate to within 99.9% or better.

Before a referral can be issued, the client's income must be verified, his or her legal situation must be assessed, and a lawyer has to be found to take the case. Although more than 90% of first referrals are approved and issued within 30 days of an application, some take longer to process. Accordingly, when the annual report data is generated, decisions are pending on some applications. For example, the final total for 2007/2008 referrals was 0.59% higher than the total in the *Annual Service Plan Report 2007/2008*. The accuracy of the 2008/2009 referral data in table 13 is expected to be similar to that published last year.

Legal advice (table 15)

Duty counsel data in table 15 is compiled from reports submitted by lawyers providing this service. Duty counsel can submit their bills and information on the number of clients assisted months after the service date. Accordingly, not all information is available when data for the annual report is generated. For example, after a total of 104,419 duty counsel clients assisted was published in the *Annual Service Plan Report 2007/2008*, duty counsel billed for another 2,928 clients applicable to that fiscal year.

Brydges Line data in table 15 is provided by the contracted service provider.

Telephone calls received by LawLINE and reported in table 15 are counted by computer; data on which of these calls involve advice services is drawn from a database maintained by LSS staff.

Legal information (tables 16 and 17)

Telephone calls received by LawLINE and reported in table 16 are counted by computer. Data that shows which of these calls involve information services is drawn from a database maintained by LSS staff.

The publications data in table 16 is drawn from a database maintained by LSS staff.

Legal information outreach worker (LIOW) data in table 16 is based on information compiled manually by LIOWs.

The website data in table 17 presents an approximate measure of public use of the society's websites. Statistics for the LSS, Family Law in BC, and LawLINK websites are captured and analyzed by computer. Data shows activity by internal (staff) as well as external users, but does not include users accessing the LSS website for electronic billing.

Policy compliance (tables 18 and 19)

Reviews of refusals based on financial and coverage eligibility are conducted at the Vancouver Regional Centre. Data in tables 18 and 19 is drawn from a database maintained by staff.

Appendix 2: Adjustments to Service Plan 2009/2010–2011/2012

	Goals	Strategies	Measures
Use Goal 1	No change	▪ Included intermediaries in strategy to increase awareness of LSS services ▪ Removed strategies for review of eligibility rules and consulting clients and partners, as this is ongoing core work ▪ Added an evaluation strategy to ensure service quality/client outcomes are prioritized in plan ▪ Tightened wording of other strategies	▪ Added an overall client satisfaction measure for better comparability with like organizations
Participate Goal 2	No change	▪ Removed strategy to pilot client training, as this project will not be undertaken during the 2009/2010–2011/2012 planning period ▪ Removed strategy to encourage use of alternative dispute resolution, as this type of referral will be put on hold to reduce costs in the coming period ▪ Tightened wording of other strategies	▪ Removed performance measure to track uptake of alternative dispute resolution referrals
Integrate Goal 3	No change	▪ Adjusted wording of strategies	▪ No change
Manage Goal 4	Shortened to "LSS manages resources soundly."	▪ Added a strategy to support employee engagement ▪ Added a strategy to address increasing service demand ▪ Removed staff recruitment and capacity management strategies and modified lawyer supply strategy in response to changing economic environment ▪ Removed strategies for tariff revisions, lawyer quality assurance, and internal review plan, as these are ongoing core work ▪ Added a strategy to address legislative/policy changes in response to current environment ▪ Tightened wording of other strategies	▪ No change

* *Service Plan 2009/2010–2011/2012* is available online at www.lss.bc.ca.

Appendix 3: Additional Performance Measures

To measure our performance, we survey stakeholders every three years. This frequency allows time for our strategies to have a measurable impact on our performance; reduces costs; and minimizes the risk that our lawyers, clients, and staff will experience "survey fatigue" from being over-surveyed. However, it also means that we do not have new results for all performance measures each year.

The information below describes past results and future targets, the importance, the benchmark comparison, and the data sources for each performance measure for which no data was collected in 2008/2009.

Goal 1

People with low incomes who have legal issues use LSS services.

Performance measures:
Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services.
Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
Accessibility: 66%	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Accessibility: 70%
Helpfulness: 65%	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Helpfulness: 69%

These measures show the degree to which clients are satisfied with the steps they had to take to receive legal aid services and the effectiveness of these services in helping them solve their legal problems.

Importance of these measures
Sustaining or increasing client satisfaction with the accessibility and helpfulness of LSS services over time will show that the society is providing clients with the legal aid services they need when and where they need them, fulfilling our mandate to help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice.

Benchmark comparison
LSS submitted survey results to the Institute of Customer-Centred Service (ICCS) for benchmarking. The society's 2007/2008 accessibility rating (3.9 out of 5.0) is in line with the average rating (4.1 out of 5.0) for like Canadian public sector organizations, including other legal aid plans, who provide data to ICCS. Service "helpfulness" is not included on the Common Measurements Tool survey the ICCS uses for benchmarking.

Data source
In 2007, Synovate, an independent survey organization, interviewed 1,582 legal aid clients by telephone about their experiences with the legal aid services they received. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level ranges from +/-2.5% for all clients and varies from +/-4.4 to +/-5.9% for specific client groups. The full survey report is available online at www.lss.bc.ca (look under "About us—Our reports").

Appendix 2: Adjustments to Service Plan 2009/2010–2011/2012

	Goals	Strategies	Measures
Use Goal 1	No change	▪ Included intermediaries in strategy to increase awareness of LSS services ▪ Removed strategies for review of eligibility rules and consulting clients and partners, as this is ongoing core work ▪ Added an evaluation strategy to ensure service quality/client outcomes are prioritized in plan ▪ Tightened wording of other strategies	▪ Added an overall client satisfaction measure for better comparability with like organizations
Participate Goal 2	No change	▪ Removed strategy to pilot client training, as this project will not be undertaken during the 2009/2010–2011/2012 planning period ▪ Removed strategy to encourage use of alternative dispute resolution, as this type of referral will be put on hold to reduce costs in the coming period ▪ Tightened wording of other strategies	▪ Removed performance measure to track uptake of alternative dispute resolution referrals
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Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2007/2008	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
Accessibility: 66%	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Accessibility: 70%
Helpfulness: 65%	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Helpfulness: 69%

These measures show the degree to which clients are satisfied with the steps they had to take to receive legal aid services and the effectiveness of these services in helping them solve their legal problems.

Importance of these measures
Sustaining or increasing client satisfaction with the accessibility and helpfulness of LSS services over time will show that the society is providing clients with the legal aid services they need when and where they need them, fulfilling our mandate to help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice.

Benchmark comparison
LSS submitted survey results to the Institute of Customer-Centred Service (ICCS) for benchmarking. The society's 2007/2008 accessibility rating (3.9 out of 5.0) is in line with the average rating (4.1 out of 5.0) for like Canadian public sector organizations, including other legal aid plans, who provide data to ICCS. Service "helpfulness" is not included on the Common Measurements Tool survey the ICCS uses for benchmarking.

Data source
In 2007, Synovate, an independent survey organization, interviewed 1,582 legal aid clients by telephone about their experiences with the legal aid services they received. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level ranges from +/-2.5% for all clients and varies from +/-4.4 to +/-5.9% for specific client groups. The full survey report is available online at www.lss.bc.ca (look under "About us—Our reports").

Goal 2

People with low incomes participate in solving and avoiding legal issues.

Performance measure: Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
n/a (New for 2010/2011)	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set

This measure shows the effectiveness of the society's efforts to provide clients with information about their legal issues and rights.

Importance of this measure
For clients to meaningfully participate in finding resolutions to their legal issues they must be informed about their legal rights and options. Improving our results on this measure will indicate that we are enhancing clients' ability to effectively address their issues within the justice system and achieve lasting solutions.

Benchmark comparison
LSS is not aware of any relevant benchmarks for this measure.

Data source
LSS will add new questions to its 2010/2011 client survey to provide data for this measure.

Performance measure: Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
n/a (New for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured

This measure shows the effectiveness of the society's support to lawyers to help clients participate in solving their legal issues.

Importance of this measure
Informed and engaged clients can work more effectively with their lawyers to achieve positive and lasting outcomes. By effectively supporting lawyers to engage their clients in the process, we are fulfilling our mandate to help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice.

Benchmark comparison
LSS is not aware of any relevant benchmarks for this measure.

Data source
LSS will add new questions to its 2009/2010 lawyer survey to provide data for this measure.

Goal 3

People with low incomes get help with non-legal issues so they can solve and avoid legal issues.

Performance measure: Percent of clients who say LSS informed them about services to address their related issues.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
	Target	Actual	2009/2010	2010/2011
n/a (New for 2010/2011)	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set

This measure shows the effectiveness of LSS in connecting clients with resources to help them with their non-legal issues.

Importance of this measure
Clients who get help for their non-legal issues are more likely to achieve positive, lasting solutions to their legal issues. Providing this help is outside of the society's mandate. However, by facilitating clients' access to services that can address these issues, we are more likely to meet our mandate to help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice.

Benchmark comparison
LSS is not aware of any relevant benchmarks for this measure.

Data source
LSS will add new questions to its 2010/2011 client survey to provide data for this measure.

Performance measures:
Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related issues.
Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
n/a	**Target**	**Actual**	**2009/2010**	**2010/2011**
(Both new for 2009/2010)	Not measured	Not measured	Baseline set	Not measured

These measures show our progress on supplying lawyers with tools and resources to support an integrated approach to providing legal aid services.

Importance of these measures
Successfully integrating services requires all service providers to have the necessary skills and resources. The model's success also depends on the support of our primary service partners—the lawyers who represent and advise our clients. Improvement on these performance measures will demonstrate that LSS is working effectively with lawyers to provide services that will help clients find positive and lasting solutions.

Benchmark comparison
LSS is not aware of any relevant benchmarks for this measure.

Data source
LSS will add new questions to its 2009/2010 lawyer survey to provide data for this measure.

Goal 4

LSS manages resources soundly to ensure clients have access to quality legal aid services that are proportionate to their needs.

Performance measure: Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS.

Past results	Performance 2008/2009		Future targets	
2006/2007	**Target**	**Actual**	**2009/2010**	**2010/2011**
75%	Not measured	Not measured	84%	Not measured

This measure shows the degree to which lawyers taking legal aid referrals are satisfied with how LSS supports them in providing services to legal aid clients.

Importance of this measure
Maintaining a supply of dedicated and skilled lawyers willing to take legal aid cases is essential to providing quality advice and representation services to clients. Increasing levels of lawyer satisfaction should reduce the risk that LSS will be unable to find skilled lawyers to take referrals for all eligible clients.

Benchmark comparison
LSS benchmarks its lawyer satisfaction results against those of Legal Aid Ontario (LAO). In response to LAO's most recent lawyer survey in 2007, 72% of lawyers and 77% of duty counsel reported high satisfaction with LAO's services, down from an overall lawyer satisfaction rating of 80% in 2006. (The results were not broken down for lawyers and duty counsel for that year.) LSS results are in line with those of Legal Aid Ontario.

Data source
Data is gathered from a tri-annual survey conducted by an independent survey organization. The full report from the 2007 Tariff Lawyer Satisfaction Survey is available online at www.lss.bc.ca (under "About us—Our reports").

Glossary

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) funding initiative. A collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Attorney General, and LSS to evaluate and fund local alternative dispute resolution projects in child protection proceedings. It is expected that once the infrastructure to support mediation is in place, these projects will run independently. Originally scheduled to end in 2007, final completion of the initiative is now expected in 2009/2010.

Common Measurements Tool (CMT). A standard set of client satisfaction survey questions developed by the Institute of Customer-Centred Service (ICCS), a non-profit agency that encourages publicly funded programs to measure client satisfaction. Public organizations submit data from surveys they conduct using the Common Measurements Tool to the ICCS, which stores it in a national databank. ICCS uses this data to provide a free benchmarking service for participating organizations.

Intermediaries. Judges, police, lawyers, court workers, local agents, staff at women's shelters, community advocates, and others in the justice system who interact with legal aid clients.

Justice access centres. A single location where people can access legal information and self-help services, needs assessment and referrals to other agencies, alternative dispute resolution services, and legal advice. Services may be delivered by on-site providers or through referrals to providers in the community. A service centre model was recommended by both the Family and Civil Justice Reform Working Groups (see www.bcjusticereview.org for more information).

Key stakeholders. Those with a direct interest in BC's legal aid plan, including people with low incomes who need legal services, service providers and intermediaries, the public, government and other funders, and LSS staff.

Reserve funds. The excess of revenue over expenses that accumulates over the life of the organization; the LSS reserve reflects assets (e.g., buildings, equipment, cash, investments) minus liabilities (e.g., accounts payable); also known as a surplus in net assets.

Contact information

For further information about the society, contact the LSS Communications Department at:

400 – 510 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 3A8
Phone: (604) 601-6000

Clients apply for legal representation at LSS regional centre offices or at local agent offices. Clients can also apply through the LSS Call Centre at (604) 408-2172 (Lower Mainland) or toll free at 1-866-577-2525. To find the address and phone number of the office nearest you, visit our website at www.lss.bc.ca (look under "Legal aid") or look in your phone book.

Regional centres

Kamloops

Kelowna

Prince George

Surrey

Terrace

Vancouver

Victoria

Satellite offices

Prince Rupert (Terrace)

Port Coquitlam (Surrey)

Local agents

Abbotsford

Campbell River

Chilliwack

Courtenay

Cranbrook

Dawson Creek

Duncan

Fort St. James

Fort St. John

Hazelton

Nanaimo

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